United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

25th PLENARY MEETING

Monday, 11 October 1993 at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 127 *(continued)*

SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/48/414/Add.6)

The President: I wish to draw the Assembly's attention to document A/48/414/Add.6. In a letter contained in that document, the Secretary-General informs me that, since the issuance of his communications dated 21, 24, 27 and 29 September and 4 and 6 October 1993, Chad has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. MPINGA KASENDA (Zaire) *(interpretation from French)*: Mr. President, the speakers who have preceded me at this prestigious rostrum have all unanimously acknowledged your outstanding intellectual qualities, your wealth of experience and your intensive knowledge of international issues which will guarantee a positive outcome to our work that promises to be very exciting at this time when we see emerging on the horizon the irreversible turning of the activities of the Organization towards real, mutually beneficial, cooperation.

The delegation of the Republic of Zaire, which it is my honour to head, associates itself with the congratulations and wishes expressed by other delegations here present and expresses the hope that your presidency will see the essential basis laid down for the establishment of this new era of peace, prosperity, mutual understanding and tolerance that we all so wish to see.

I should also like to extend my sincere congratulations to the other members of the Bureau who, I am sure, will effectively assist you in carrying out your onerous but inspiring tasks as President.

To your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev, I should like to pay a particular and well-deserved tribute for the competence, skill and know-how with which he so capably guided the work of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

I should like to express to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of the Organization, the sincere expression of our appreciation and our encouragement of his determination in the search for peaceful solutions to the many armed conflicts that are devastating the world.

I should also like to welcome to the Organization the new Member States. They can count on the cooperation and assistance, both bilateral and multilateral, of the Republic of Zaire.

Barely three years ago the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of this marvelous planet Earth were filled

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with the hope of seeing close and multifaceted cooperation for development among nations.

Although the cold war was blown away by the force of the wind of perestroika we are obliged to note that this forty-eighth session of the General Assembly has opened at a time when we are witnessing the resumption of armed conflicts in at least three of the five continents which make up this world.

The collapse of the socialist bloc brought with it only a moment of calm for we note at present the explosion of hotbeds of tension and fratricidal wars in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the former Yugoslavia, and we condemn the monstrous, inhuman and horrendous acts of modern civilization there.

The primary cause of all these wars is religious or ethnic intolerance and the non-acceptance of political opinions contrary to those which one believes to be of immutable and subject to imposition on all. Thus, in Asia anachronistic situations persist and entire populations are condemned to wander without any hope of a better tomorrow.

Nevertheless, my delegation backs the negotiations that are now taking place between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on the question of Palestine and urges all the protagonists in this drama to do all in their power to ensure that these consultations lead to the conclusion of a peace agreement guaranteeing the right of each people to exist in internationally recognized territory.

We hail the courage and determination of their excellencies the Prime Minister of Israel and the President of the PLO who have recognized autonomy for Gaza and Jericho and have also committed themselves to put an end to acts of piracy and sabotage. May their example be followed by other States involved in this conflict so that a lasting peace can finally be established in this region and that we can see genuine cooperation for development.

So too, we reaffirm our full support and our backing for the efforts made by the two Koreas towards their peaceful reunification.

We should also like to take advantage of this opportunity to congratulate the United Nations authorities which have effectively contributed to the organization of free and democratic elections in Cambodia.

As regards Africa, this continent too has not been spared by the situation of semi-war, semi-peace in which young States must manage bloody conflicts which sorely try their fragile State structures and their precarious socio-economic infrastructures. However, the Republic of Zaire is gratified to see the international community mobilizing to prevent new conflicts and to find peaceful solutions to those fratricidal wars which are devastating a good number of African States.

The plethora of hotbeds of tension and the recourse to military action, whether for intervention or for pacification, are likely to wipe out these efforts and to damage the humanitarian action and the noble objectives of peace and harmony pursued by the United Nations.

Concerning southern Africa, in particular, Zaire supports the action being taken by the United Nations in Mozambique, and urges all the parties to the conflict to respect the commitments they have undertaken and to work towards the establishment of lasting peace there.

The positive results that we have seen in South Africa, where the white minority has agreed to involve the black majority in the administration of public affairs in a Transitional Executive Council, are grounds for satisfaction for all those who have contributed towards them, and for legitimate pride for Presidents Mandela and De Klerk.

Given these prospects for peace that we can see just over the horizon, it is our keen hope that there will be genuine reconciliation within the black community in South Africa so that a fratricidal war does not break out that would quite likely support the notions of those who wish to hold back the advent of a democratic and multi-racial Republic of South Africa.

I beg the Assembly's indulgence, since I should like now to dwell on the case of our neighbour Angola, which shares with Zaire a frontier over 2,600 kilometres long; in Angola, the civil war, which is becoming more intense, is causing considerable loss of life and incalculable material damage and is threatening the territorial integrity of that young nation.

The Republic of Zaire, which, since it acceded to independence, has had to suffer the throes of civil war, rebellion and many attempts at secession, cannot afford to support a civil war in Angola. The tragic situation being experienced by that fraternal nation is of extreme concern to us, because it is causing us enormous political, economic and social problems. Zaire is actually a semi-landlocked country, and the closure of the Benguela railway and the continuing insecurity right alongside Matadi port, our only outlet to the sea - as a result of the

crossfire between the Popular Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA) and UNITA - are doing my country considerable economic damage right at a moment when it is no longer receiving bilateral or multilateral assistance.

In addition to these many economic difficulties, there has been a massive influx of our Angolan brothers and sisters, who are finding refuge with Zairian families, to which they are linked by historical ties of blood. Providing food, shelter and so on for the refugees is increasing the difficulties being experienced by the host families, who are themselves rather disadvantaged.

The international community knows that the Republic of Zaire right now is going through a period of political turbulence and is encountering enormous economic and financial difficulties. In these conditions, where could Zaire find the additional resources to finance a civil war in Angola? Taking into account its internal problems, my country has no interest in promoting the traffic in weapons of war through Matadi port, given that they could change hands and fuel a civil war on its own territory.

Moreover, Zaire, which neither makes nor sells arms, deplores the attitude of those countries whose citizens manufacture arms and sell them to the belligerents - under the tolerant gaze of their Governments - and then come and shed crocodile tears in international forums over the fate of the victims of this fratricidal war.

The Republic of Zaire, which assisted the Republic of Angola in its struggle for independence and, through Zaire's mediation, facilitated the historic meeting between President dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi at Gbadolite, is still ready to seek, with them, ways and means of putting an end to the Angolan tragedy. This is the spirit in which Zaire welcomed Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, on his visit to Kinshasa last September, and in which the President of the Republic of Zaire, Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko, dispatched to his Angolan counterpart an emissary whose task was to dispel any ambiguity as to whether there was meddling of any kind by my country in Angola's internal affairs.

Lastly, the Republic of Zaire, which has played an active part at the recent Libreville conference on security problems in central Africa and will soon sign the non-aggression pact that was drawn up there, considers itself an important link in the peace and security of the subregion, and does not intend to take any action that might sour the relations of good neighbourliness and cooperation that exist between our States. Ancient African wisdom tells us that when your neighbour's house is on fire, you must help him put it out in order to stop the wind wafting the flames towards your own house.

After the political turbulence that Africa experienced during the first few years of independence, some political thinkers and players believed, in good faith, that establishing strong government based on omnipresent and omnipotent single parties could forge national unity and ensure our States' harmonious development. The Republic of Zaire was no exception to this outline. In fact, for over two decades now a monolithic political system has been in operation, with its ups and downs, and has ended up, as a result of its own internal contradictions, in such deadlock that on 24 April 1990 the President of the Republic, after three months of consultations of the people, decreed the dissolution of the single party and proposed the introduction of a pluralistic political system.

Unfortunately, the enthusiasm that followed gave birth to a sort of collective outpouring and the frenzied establishment of political parties, of which there are now 360 for a total population of 40 million or so. In our concern to make an objective reassessment of our history, map out our future and ensure national reconciliation, we held a Sovereign National Conference, which, lasting over 16 months, was the costliest and the longest in Africa.

The Conference raised great hopes but was unable to achieve all its goals because, from the outset, those behind it had come to it for two different reasons. For some, the Conference was the best place to take power along revolutionary-type lines - dissolving all the existing institutions and sidelining those in charge of them - while for others, who championed a reformist type of plan, the Conference ought rather to be the place for organizing government through a progressive restructuring of the institutions. This basic difference caused heightened passions from the beginning to the end of the Conference, and the political players ended up more divided than they had been before.

As the document setting out constitutional provisions for the transitional period was not taken to its logical conclusion - it failed to abrogate expressly the Constitution in force - the country found itself with two basic constitutional texts. In conditions such as these, it has been difficult to arrange an equitable sharing of power between the various transitional institutions, which is why we have an institutional crisis and a political impasse.

To extricate ourselves from this situation, and on the initiative of the President of the Republic and the President

of the Supreme Council of the Republic, the delegates of several political platforms met in caucus to create a new institutional framework. But the results of the caucus were again disputed and the entire political class felt the need to resume negotiations. These achieved, *inter alia*, the establishment of a new institutional framework, the unanimous acceptance of a timetable establishing the various dates for elections in the next 15 months and the adoption by referendum, within the same period, of a new constitution.

Thus, a referendum will be held in 1994 on the adoption of the new constitution. There will also be free, transparent and democratic elections for mandates for the presidency of the Republic, the Parliament and the regional and local councils. The presence of an independent national electoral commission and international observers is planned to reassure all sides of the proper carrying out of all electoral operations. Thus, Zaire repeats its request to the United Nations bodies and countries with a long history of democracy for substantial help in the implementation of these important timetables.

I should like here, on behalf of the Government of my country, to thank Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of our universal Organization, who, at the request of the President of the Republic, sent one of his closest assistants, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, to Kinshasa to try to gather the political class of Zaire around the negotiating table. We extend to him here the deep gratitude of the people of Zaire for his selflessness and readiness in his attempt to reconcile the sons and daughters of my country.

In an atmosphere of political crisis and social tension, the protection of human rights becomes very difficult and is subject to suspicions. The reestablishment of State authority and respect for the laws of the land are often identified, at best, with constraints and, at worst, with arbitrary actions, while a country cannot become involved in development projects without order or collective discipline.

Despite the flaws noted in the implementation of human rights, Zaire has nevertheless made commendable efforts along those lines by granting full freedom to the press and authorizing the free exercise of political activities and the free expression of opinions. It intends to follow up these moves by cooperating with the specialized agencies of the United Nations in making more effective those bodies in Zaire entrusted with ensuring the strict observance of human rights.

The democratization process is irreversible in Zaire and no one is contemplating re-establishing the old order. We all aspire to change and to the establishment of a State of law. What is important at the present stage of my country's development is to know how to implement that change peacefully. For now, we are asking the international community and in particular those countries which wrongly believe that they have received a mandate to administer Zaire to let the Zairians themselves settle their own problems, for whenever they are free of foreign interference they always manage to overcome their antagonisms. We therefore urge our usual partners to help us to overcome this crisis instead of dividing us by canonizing some and rendering others anathema.

The opportunity has thus been offered to certain countries that call themselves champions of democracy to support the organization of free and transparent elections in Zaire rather than to propose undemocratic plans that bring people to power who do not have the vote of the population, which alone can confer legitimacy. That, in our view, is the only way to rein in the excessive ambitions of certain political leaders who, in their obtrusive declarations in Kinshasa and the Western capitals, are harming the proper unfolding of the democratization process.

The international community is certainly unaware of the dishonourable treatment experienced by Zairians in their travel to other countries. At present, it is nearly impossible for a citizen of Zaire to travel to, or opt to reside in, certain countries of the northern hemisphere, since for his visa is automatically refused unless he reviles his country and the legally established authorities. Is it the full enjoyment of fundamental human freedoms when he cannot reside in a territory other than his own unless he requests the status of political refugee? Are the citizens of Zaire treated this way being punished for their opinions? How can those countries that practise this policy of exclusion have a precise idea of what is transpiring in Zaire when they are preventing one category of my fellow citizens from freely expressing themselves and championing political ideas that run contrary to their own?

The political uncertainties that have overshadowed Zaire for three years have pushed into the background the economic and social problems of a country in which strikes, city-wide shutdowns, civil disobedience and looting have torn asunder the economic fabric and aggravated the people's poverty. Zaire - which has seen itself arbitrarily and vexingly deprived, under the pressure of certain Western Powers, of access to financial facilities and to bilateral and multilateral assistance at a time when its

people has the greatest need - hopes that the new era in the offing will provide an opportunity for all its partners to assist it to revive its collapsed economy. In this context, my country very much hopes to resume dialogue with the Bretton Woods institutions to improve the management of public finances and to promote the flourishing of free enterprise.

As everyone knows, Zaire is a subcontinent made up of a mosaic of tribes and ethnic groups which periodically, as happens throughout the world, have trouble living together. As we approach major political or electoral stages, tensions exacerbated by demagogues is transformed into open conflicts that compel, often in inhuman conditions, some of our compatriots to abandon their homes.

The Government of the Republic of Zaire cannot tolerate a situation in which citizens of Zaire find themselves refugees in their own land. Thus, more specifically concerning Shaba, it is not correct to speak of "ethnic cleansing", since the Shaba, like the two Kasai, are not ethnic groups but the provincial homes of several ethnic groups. The Government has taken measures to halt all forced displacements, ensure the security of those who wish to remain in Shaba, and organize transportation of those who have opted to leave in humanly acceptable conditions. This task, like that of the restoration of displaced persons to their original homes, requires enormous material and financial means.

In cooperation with the specialized bodies of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, the Government is working to gather all available means in order to come to the aid of the victims of this tragedy.

Here we should like to welcome the action carried out, at the request of the President of the Republic, by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who sent a specialized inter-agency team led by Mr. Darko Silovic to study in the field the ways and means to bring humanitarian assistance to these disadvantaged peoples. We fervently hope that the international community will respond massively and positively to the Secretary-General's appeal, and we are grateful in advance for this.

Concerning the ethnic difficulties in North Kivu, it is important to know that this is an ancient problem born of colonization, which was then perpetuated by the transplantation of Rwandese peoples to Zaire and by the influx of refugees following the ethnic conflicts that neighbouring country has experienced. Without lingering over the underlying causes of this conflict, we should like to inform international opinion that the Government has taken measures to re-establish calm in the region and to ensure the security of all parties to the conflict.

An appeal to humanitarian assistance for those peoples who have lost everything in these sad events is sent out to the international community, the non-governmental organizations and Zaire's customary partners, in light of the urgency of the situation and the paucity of our means which do not allow us to cope with it alone.

Before concluding my statement, I should like to take up a problem which is of the greatest concern to the international community and to my country in particular: environmental protection. Zaire, whose considerable expanse of tropical humid forest gives it the symbolic status of the planet's second lung would appreciate the international community's acknowledgement of the huge sacrifices it is making, which are depriving it of incalculable financial resources.

The preservation of the ozone layer requires that additional resources be found for the implementation of Agenda 21 and the conventions dealing with biodiversity. Thus, my country believes that its commitment not to cut down various species of trees which it considers the common heritage of mankind should allow it to benefit from certain types of compensation which would fill this financial vacuum or at least this lack of earning power.

Finally, the delegation of the Republic of Zaire joins in the request made by numerous delegations for a restructuring of the United Nations system to allow all Member States, regardless of size, fully to play their role in building a world of justice, peace and mutually advantageous cooperation.

Mr. TURNQUEST (Bahamas): Twenty years ago the Bahamas took its seat as the 138th Member in this Assembly of the United Nations, and we proudly assumed the solemn obligations and responsibilities conferred by the Charter. This session marks our twentieth anniversary, which we celebrate with our friends of the now reunited Germany with whom we were admitted.

As we reflect on the global events of those two decades, we see a world significantly transformed. Where there was a single Soviet Union and a single Yugoslav Republic, we now have the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States. In addition, the admission of many new States to this great Organization has resulted in an almost complete universality of membership. It is therefore with much joy that we warmly welcome all new

Members and extend to each the fraternal hand of friendship and partnership in the continued struggle for human dignity and development.

The Bahamas has also witnessed significant national development since its membership. Today we are one of the most stable and democratic societies. We are proud of this achievement, and we encourage all those who would to follow our example of freedom, justice and peace, buttressed by sound principles of human and national development.

We have yet another reason for celebration. Your unanimous election to the presidency of this forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, Sir, is an historic occasion not only for you personally and for your great country but also for every Caribbean Government and person. Bahamians, together with all Caribbean peoples, therefore pay high tribute to you and to your country. We are fully conscious of your impeccable and enviable credentials as a diplomat, and we are satisfied that those same skills will serve to guide us through this session, despite its challenges, to successful and lasting results.

Permit me also to pay high tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, for his outstanding contributions to the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. His presidency witnessed significant achievements and today we are the beneficiaries of his visionary leadership.

While we who are privileged to represent our Governments have the luxury of pronouncing international policies, the Secretary-General enjoys no such luxury. His is the responsibility of going beyond the rhetoric to the substance of the many resolutions and decisions which we adopt in this Assembly each year. His task is therefore dauntingly complex. Nevertheless, he has borne his enormous responsibilities with great dignity and high distinction.

In this connection, we cannot help but recall the biblical injunction: "Out of Egypt have I called my Son". (*The Holy Bible, Matthew 2:15*) Like his predecessor, he has performed beyond our expectations, and is deserving of our praise for his proficiency in assisting this Organization in shaping contemporary history so dramatically.

At this juncture I wish to take this opportunity to extend the deepest sympathy of the Government and the people of the Bahamas to the people and the Government of India, who suffered such tragic loss of life and property during the recent devastating earthquake, and to reaffirm our solidarity with them during this time of national disaster.

It would be very easy for me on behalf of my Government and country to rehearse the developments of the past year and offer the members of the Assembly some observations. However, we believe that a focus on the future is more timely.

As we near the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, it is the view of the Bahamas that that significant turning-point should be seized as an opportunity to assess where we are and what is required to move further ahead in the fulfilment of the principles of the Charter, so that the forthcoming anniversary will indeed be cause for celebration.

In reflecting on what is required to move ahead, we invite all Member States to focus with us on how each one of us, given our varied capacities, can assist the Organization in moving closer to the full achievement of the principles enshrined in the Charter.

There is no question that the United Nations, in its often unappreciated role in the promotion of such objectives as international cooperation and respect for human rights, has been vindicated in this approach by successes far beyond expectations.

In the political sphere, such successes include the fostering of a shift to democracy in Eastern Europe; the dramatic reduction, through voluntary destruction, of nuclear weapons; the Mission of the Organization of American States (OAS) and United Nations in Haiti; the establishment of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991; the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council in South Africa; the very recent signing of the historic peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as well as the Declaration of Principles between Israel and Jordan; and the repelling of aggression and the restoration of sovereignty in Kuwait. In this context, the Security Council resolution that determines the Kuwaiti boundary must be respected.

In addressing the hurdles which must be overcome before lasting solutions are achieved, we believe that more emphasis should also be placed on the expanded economic, social and military role of the United Nations. That role is demonstrated by the peace-keeping forces dispatched

globally and by the recent successful Conferences on Environment and Development and Human Rights, as well as by the forthcoming conferences on women, population and development, the Summit for Social Development and, most importantly for the Bahamas, the forthcoming Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, scheduled to be held at Barbados in 1994.

The Bahamas places particular emphasis on the role of the United Nations in the economic and social fields and fully expects that the revitalized United Nations will provide an enhanced capacity for the Organization to perform that important role. It is in this context, therefore, that we support the efforts of the Secretary-General to restructure the Organization in the economic and social fields.

As members are aware, success invariably brings greater responsibilities and challenges. Indeed, these greater responsibilities, challenges, and even attendant impediments, have regrettably already begun to sour the excitement of the many achievements attained. But we must not let this reverse side of success debilitate us. We must remain focused so that narrower vested interests do not hinder the achievement of goals set in the wider interest. We must permit no circumstance to impede the earliest cessation of the atrocities of war for a return to peaceful settlement of disputes. We must be sensitive to and respond practically, in the spirit of the Charter, to national needs, pressures and civil unrest. The call for regional action in the settlement of disputes and peace-keeping will also need to be further emphasized as we seek to maintain the integrity of the Organization.

In this connection, we particularly underscore the need for the fullest support of the implementation of the Governors Island Accord on the restoration of democracy in Haiti, not only on the basis of unrelenting moral pressure but, equally, through material and technical assistance towards fostering the economic revitalization and enduring health of that country's democratic institutions.

While the unpleasant spectacle of politics through conflict has reasserted itself at the centre of the world stage, regrettably, politics has two companions, which often influence it, though rarely gaining the same degree and magnitude of attention given to politics. These two companions are economic and social tensions. We must ever be vigilant of these two, often unruly companions. Again, we must find our focus in the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Against that background, there are several questions I feel must be put as part of the deliberations we will undertake during this session.

First, is the peace dividend releasing adequate resources and civilian expertise to impact developmental needs?

Secondly, should life after self-determination for the newer members of the international community provoke stagnant growth in those less-recently sovereign?

Thirdly, is there sufficient retraining and assistance to ensure that the trade liberalization facilitated by megablocs promotes fair, democratic and transparent institutional strengthening and the widest empowerment?

And, lastly, how do we ensure that environmental awareness, as a catalyst for a better quality of life globally, does not become yet another trade conditionality?

These questions are being posed because, if they are neglected or inadequately addressed, the new world order will be but a shifting of power centres and a spawning of new seeds of international economic, social and political instability.

In many countries, including the Bahamas, social tensions are reordering national priorities. We must return to basics in dealing with problems of a pandemic nature, such as poverty, illicit drugs, crime, violence, international terrorism, human rights violations and disease, especially the urgent necessity for dealing with the devastations caused by acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Throughout this global village our Member States are facing the disintegration of the traditional family values, coupled with rampant unemployment. We must re-emphasize those spiritual values which respect life, the dignity and worth of the human person and his or her importance to national life and development. In order that our peoples will avoid hopelessness and survive the adverse effects of economic decline, we must share more directly the burden of action for solutions with those community institutions and social partners which are the teachers and the examples of positive spiritual and moral values.

Fundamentally, the Bahamas remains morally persuaded of, and financially committed to, the goals and worth of the United Nations. To underscore this commitment, The Bahamas has recently deposited instruments of accession to international agreements in

some of the priority areas on the United Nations agenda, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and we shall shortly sign the chemical weapons Convention. In reality, the approaches and solutions found in these Conventions have long been traditional Bahamian policy and practice.

Despite a 100 per cent increase in the regular budget assessment for the Bahamas over the past five years, we remain unwavering in our acceptance of the necessary sharing of the financial burden in order that this Organization may achieve its objectives. On the other hand, the Bahamas wishes to have consideration given to the level of its assessment, and in that process we shall be submitting evidence that our reputed comparatively high per capita income not only masks the true indigenous per capita income situation, but also belies the increasing demands arising from the development needs of our widely scattered archipelago. We submit that, given these circumstances, there ought to be some mitigation available to the Bahamas, given these circumstances.

The Bahamas is very cognizant that we remain one of the few cases of comparative political tranquillity and unassailed natural beauty. Our commitment to the maintenance of national unity and the preservation of the environment is unwavering. We therefore believe that the Bahamas is ideally suited as a propitious setting for difficult negotiations, and we offer the Organization our facilities, which, we are convinced, will enhance the conduct of such affairs. We further pledge our commitment to contribute, to the extent possible, to making operational the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace" and Papua New Guinea's proposed agenda for development. We see these agenda items as practical approaches to dealing with problem-solving for conflict resolution, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building, and poverty alleviation.

As we approach the fiftieth year of our Organization's existence, to ensure even better years ahead our watchwords should be "perspective" and "purpose": perspective in not losing sight of the goals of our founding fathers, who emphasized the primacy of people in the preamble to our Charter; and purpose in recognizing and accepting that the means for, and the road to, the end of international disorder and insecurity must begin with the individual. Our initially separate personal attitudes, motives and actions ultimately determine whether there will be an international climate for peace or one for disorder. The success of our Organization is therefore dependent, at one and the same time, on our international, collective and personal actions.

In our Caribbean corner of this global village, the Bahamas continues its efforts in the struggle to bring about peace and democracy in neighbouring Haiti. The success of this process will permit our own social and economic landscape to be relieved of the extra burden of caring for the thousands of illegal immigrants from that country who defy the sometimes harsh elements of nature in search of a safe haven in our relative paradise. We trust that the world - and especially the Member States of this Organization - has taken due note of the enormous weight imposed upon our small country by this undertaking. The Bahamas has well demonstrated its concern and care for its neighbours of the Republic of Haiti. I call to mind the famous statement by one of the young residents of Father Flanagan's Boys' Town United States of America . When asked about the concern and care he demonstrated for his brother he replied, "He ain't heavy, Father; he's my brother". The fact is, our brother is heavy, but we bear him gladly, in Christian charity, and in full and great expectation of imminent peace in Haiti.

Our Bahamas remains proudly and immovably in league with this great Organization.

Mrs. WERLEIGH (Haiti) *(interpretation from French)*: For the Haitian delegation, the assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly by, for the first time ever, a representative of the Caribbean is a source of pride and satisfaction. I should like to convey to you, Mr. President, the warm congratulations of the President, the Government and the people of the Republic of Haiti on your unanimous election and their best wishes for success in your endeavours. Your selection is undoubtedly a manifestation of the well-founded acknowledgement of your eminent personal qualities and rich diplomatic experience, and also attests to the growing role of your country, the Republic of Guyana, in international relations.

I wish also to congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, who successfully directed the Assembly's work at its forty-seventh session.

This is also an opportunity for me to express our profound appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his remarkable efforts in the cause of peace and for the new dynamics that he has stamped on the Organization.

As the century draws to a close, history is being made at a remarkable pace. Every day there are important events that put international life on a new course because of the profound impact they have on the destiny of peoples. It seems to us that, at the dawn of the third millennium, the world is seeking new direction. Respect for the person, the need for democracy and fundamental freedoms and the climate of peace to which peoples throughout the world aspire: these concepts are taking concrete form in major events that attract our attention today. In the search for a new dimension to give to peace, leaders in various parts of the world have begun a dialogue that, in the past, was thought impossible.

This is the case in the Middle East, where, after decades of hostility, Israelis and Palestinians have embarked on the path to a historic *rapprochement*, which we hope will be of benefit to the two peoples and the entire region.

Likewise, recent developments in South Africa - notably the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council and the announcement that free elections are to be held on 27 April 1994 on the basis of universal suffrage - signal the long-awaited building of a multi-racial, democratic and united society.

Following two decades of civil war, Cambodia is at last experiencing a period of peace. This has made possible the holding of democratic general elections and the establishment of a legitimate Government.

After 12 years of armed conflict, El Salvador, with the signing of the Mexico Agreements, is moving towards the consolidation of peace.

We must note that, in all continents, considerable progress is being made in the search for peace, although the existence of hotbeds of tension of all types - fuelled by, among other factors, racial, ethnic, tribal or clan differences - indicates that dialogue, which alone can ensure harmonious human coexistence, is not always achieved spontaneously.

The United Nations has played a decisive role in the mediation aimed at securing a negotiated settlement of these crises. We support the Secretary-General's sustained efforts to contribute to the process of bringing peace to these peoples, whose pain, privation and distress resonate deeply in the hearts of the Haitian people. There is no doubt that the concepts of preventive diplomacy, maintenance of peace, restoration of peace and peace building that are developed in the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace" are guiding principles for this Organization in its action to guarantee international peace and security.

But, in order to meet the diverse challenges confronting it and to respond to the expectations placed in it, the United Nations must adapt to a new reality and must have adequate means to do so. In this context, the Haitian delegation supports the process of reform and restructuring aimed at increasing the Organization's effectiveness. We believe that United Nations activities in the field of economic and social development should be given at least as much attention as that accorded to peace-keeping operations.

Unquestionably, the "Agenda for Peace" provides the Organization with a point of reference, which enables us to approach the problems of peace in a global environment that is in a state of change and compels us to reflect on the question of what constitutes the very foundations of peace. Some say that peace is indissociably related to democracy and development. We share this view. Without peace, there can be no development, and, without development and respect for human rights, one cannot expect social peace.

My Government, which was established as a result of the Governors Island Agreements, believes that the fundamental principles proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the Haitian Constitution should be constantly in our minds, motivating us to provide all the better for the well-being of our people.

For two years the Haitian people has been waging an earnest and constant struggle for the restoration of democracy in Haiti and of the fundamental rights that were stolen from it in the *coup d'état* of 30 September 1991. Today, thanks to the constant support of the international community, we are on the eve of turning this painful page in the history of our country. In this respect, we should like to express warm thanks to the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General and the Organization of American States for his inestimable achievement. We hope that we shall be able to continue to cooperate with him towards securing a definitive settlement of the Haitian crisis.

As members know, the Governors Island Agreement was signed on 3 July 1993. That instrument sets the modalities for the restoration of constitutional order and democracy in Haiti.

On 30 August a Prime Minister, chosen in accordance with our Constitution, took office, and a consensus Government was established. The economic measures that had been adopted by the Security Council were suspended, and they will be lifted definitively at the end of the transitional process. Technical assistance, to strengthen the institutions and to consolidate democracy, is taking shape through the United Nations Mission in Haiti, which is already beginning to be deployed.

With a view to fostering national reconciliation, the President of the Republic has granted an amnesty in respect of political offences committed during the period of the *coup d'état*.

Other steps remain to be taken before October 30, when His Excellency Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the democratically elected President, returns to Haiti to take up again the mandate conferred upon him by the Haitian people.

None the less, recent events, characterized by an upsurge of violence, greatly discredit the political will of the other party to respect scrupulously all the terms of the Governors Island Agreement and the New York Pact. Just a few hours ago, armed groups demonstrated at Port-au-Prince to oppose the arrival of the members of the technical mission of the United Nations. The national radio station was under assault by armed individuals manifestly opposed to a peaceful settlement of the crisis. Such behaviour clearly jeopardizes the success of the Governors Island Agreement. The setting up of such institutionalized mechanisms of violence and intimidation by factions opposing the establishment of democracy and the growing number of human-rights violations worry us, because they reveal the deliberate bad faith of institutions whose function it is precisely to safeguard security and our citizens' exercise of their rights.

Aware that this situation cannot go on, we send out from this rostrum a sincere appeal to all those who wish in good will to build a better life today and a better future for the children of Haiti and to give to our country an opportunity to renew its path of progress. We also appeal to the international community to maintain its pressure so that the minority forces opposing the democratic aspirations of the Haitian people will find themselves completely isolated and so that they will have no choice other than dialogue and reconciliation.

The return of constitutional order in Haiti is part of the genuine international political plan for which we have fought, and it symbolizes at the same time an effort for a democratization process in Haiti and, at the world level, the triumph of law, supported by the moral solidarity of the international community.

The free and honest elections of 16 December 1990, which brought President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power, represent the country's first democratic experience since its independence, the first application of the Haitian Constitution of 1987 and, above all, the first step towards guaranteeing the rights of the citizen. Our experiences over the past two years have convinced us that the protection of democracy and fundamental rights is a cause that transcends our national borders and takes on an international dimension.

The return of constitutional order in Haiti will be a victory of the State and the rule of law over totalitarianism and imposture, an ongoing struggle that unites us all and makes it possible for us to confront those who jeopardize peace.

We know that in the absence of democracy and, therefore, in the absence of the institutions and structures of the rule of law, the protection of human rights would be quixotic and ineffectual, especially in my country. This democracy requires real participation, pluralistic and transparent. This democracy, in our view, cannot mean only the holding of periodic elections; it means, rather, a collective way of life in an adapted economy.

The invaluable support of the international community will make possible the return of constitutional order in my country, and we shall apply all our national resources to the construction of a State where the rule of law genuinely prevails, a State that does not content itself merely with guaranteeing public freedoms, but that also seeks to promote equality and solidarity. This is the challenge we shall try to meet, because we firmly believe that a State in which all its children cannot live because of dictatorship and barbarism is unacceptable at the dawning of the twenty-first century.

The political stakes the international community must face are compounded by economic, social and cultural challenges. Poverty, ignorance and the scourge of disease are still negative factors threatening the very cohesion of States and continuing to cause gross imbalances in the countries of the South, especially the least developed among them. An unbridled imitation of Western models has led some countries to ignore almost completely the value of their heritage of creativity and wisdom and their enterprising spirit. The result is the absence of a cultural dimension of development and a lack of participation by an

important sector of their societies: the most impoverished sector, which is unable to protest, or to protect its own interests, a sector made up especially of women, children and the masses of disenfranchised poor.

Efforts have been made at the national, regional and international levels. A certain amount of progress has been achieved. In spite of all that, the values proposed - entrepreneurship, growth, profit and so on - remain inaccessible to the great majority of people living in the countries of the South. This poses a grave threat to one of the very cornerstones of human rights: the right to development.

Day by day the world is becoming increasingly interdependent and, in a sense, increasingly integrated. We are confronting a profound transition that promises to be complex and hazardous. We must do our best so that this globalization, this world economy, will not further widen the gap between North and South. The absence of an equitable system is being felt increasingly. The South remains in a position of subordination and dependence which prevents it from managing this new world order well. Global initiatives are indeed necessary. As we approach the twenty-first century a profound reform of the international system, particularly in the fields of trade, finance and technology, has become vitally important. I do mean profound reform, a reform that will bring about a restructured dialogue between North and South; a reform that will lead to viable and sustainable economic growth for the countries of both North and South, a growth which will be measured not only by growth in gross national product but also by certain social and political achievements; the access by all without any discrimination to fundamental services such as food, health-care, housing and appropriate education; and access to a democratic form of government and effective system of justice to protect all the people.

Lasting, bold and courageous solutions must be found if we truly want to lift the barriers that prevent the economic development of the group of countries to which we belong.

The questions of debt, delays in the flow of technology, of capital, and of direct investment to the countries of the South, the constant decline in the prices of commodities, worsening access to markets and deterioration in the terms of trade are all questions that need to be discussed seriously by the international community if we are to arrive at a better balanced, new international economic order.

The Republic of Haiti, which over the past two years has experienced a situation that the Security Council described as unique and exceptional, is now at a crossroads. In order to restore the process of democracy and the rule of law in the country the population of Haiti and its legitimate Government have made enormous sacrifices. These sacrifices, together with a long history of corruption, denial of rights, and plundering, have led to disaster at the economic, social and environmental levels. Whole sectors of national production have been destructured and the environment has been dramatically affected. The social cost of a return to democracy is extremely high and has therefore in advance jeopardized all future endogenous development efforts.

That is why we ask for the unfailing support and backing of the international community, which, we feel, should in the short-, medium- and long-term involve substantial, increased and strengthened technical and financial cooperation.

The time has come to transform the vast upsurge of solidarity which we have seen in the course of the past two years, into a powerful, concerted effort at open, fruitful and substantially enhanced cooperation.

The Organization, better than anyone, is aware of the breadth of the challenges today confronting the Government of Haiti. It would be futile to hope for a strengthening of the rule of law, which remains our priority objective, if we are not able rapidly to alleviate the enormous distress facing the overwhelming majority of the Haitian people.

We want to be assured that today as in the past the Organization will continue to stand by us at this crucial stage, as a result of which socio-economic conditions should be substantially improved in a Haiti that is reconciled with itself and in which rights and freedoms flourish.

While we recognize that no price can be placed on peace we do believe that it requires dialogue and reconciliation, without which the process of transition cannot lead to lasting democracy.

The fashioning of a new world has been the shared responsibility of us all since the founding of the Organization in 1945. At the San Francisco Conference the Haitian delegation, imbued with the historic responsibility of being the first black republic in the world, had understood, above and beyond the inspiration of the day which led to the establishment of the United Nations,

that the Organization represented an opportunity not only for our island nation but also for all responsible countries that would join this community of nations.

We want to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to the new Member States and we hope that the ad hoc committee which is to study the question of Taiwan will find a solution that is satisfactory to all the parties concerned, in keeping with the fundamental principles of international law.

Let us take the tremendous opportunity being given to us today to build the new world that generations of men and women are awaiting; let us take this opportunity to help each other by establishing a continuous dialogue between North and South in order to find urgent responses and solutions to the problem of underdevelopment and poverty, that ailment of our century which has shaken mankind. May dialogue become our password.

Mr. LENGSAVAD (Lao People's Democratic Republic) *(spoke in Lao; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)*: First of all, I would like on behalf of the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to congratulate you, Sir, most warmly on your unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its forty-eighth session. We are familiar with your great diplomatic skills and your patience and perseverance and therefore feel certain that you will guide the work of this session towards a successful conclusion.

I would also like to convey our wholehearted congratulations to the Secretary-General of our Organization, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the tireless and efficient efforts he has exerted in discharging his important responsibilities over the past year. We wish him every success in the accomplishment of his complex and difficult tasks at the head of our Organization.

The Lao delegation also extends a welcome to the States that have recently become Members of the United Nations: the Principality of Andorra, Eritrea, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Principality of Monaco, the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic. Their presence among us certainly enhances the universality of the United Nations.

The present session of the General Assembly has begun at a time when the international situation as a whole is evolving in a positive direction, conducive both to dialogue and to cooperation between States. None the less, the genuine peace that peoples the world over have so long awaited has not been attained. From East to West, from North to South, sizeable and often tragic conflicts keep breaking out. It is true that some of them have been successfully resolved, but many others, of an ethnic, racial and religious nature, are arising in various parts of the world and are raging unabated, rendering the world situation fragile and precarious.

In Europe, the situation in the Republic of Bosnia remains tense and even explosive, and could threaten both regional and global peace and security. In flagrant defiance of international humanitarian law, crimes such as "ethnic cleansing", mass rapes, torture and deliberate bombing of civilian targets continue to be committed against the innocent Bosnian people. Given the gravity of the problem, all the parties to this painful conflict should show the courage and the sense of realism necessary to reach a just and equitable political settlement freely and as quickly as possible, and thereby contribute to the restoration of peace, security and normalcy in that country and in the entire region.

In South Africa, the conclusion of an agreement on the date of the first multiracial elections and the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council constitute an important stage in the efforts of the people of that country to build a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. Nevertheless, the overall situation in the country remains fragile. Sadly, we still witness an upsurge of acts of violence and of discord in many parts of the country. Therefore, political, social and racial order must be restored so that the reforms thus begun can continue, at an accelerated pace.

In Somalia, the evolution of the situation is still disquieting. It is vital that the international community find just and lasting solutions to this problem in accordance with the rights and aspirations of the Somali people.

In the Middle East, an important step has been taken in the quest for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Israel-Arab conflict. The Lao delegation is pleased at the mutual recognition between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, as well as the Gaza-Jericho autonomy agreement which was signed in Washington on 13 September 1993. We hope that that agreement will help the various parties to the conflict to establish a climate of mutual trust and in this way to find a comprehensive settlement that is just and honourable for all, in the framework of Security Council resolutions 242

(1967) and 338 (1973) and other relevant United Nations resolutions.

In western Asia, despite the signing last March at Islamabad of a peace agreement between the Afghan parties in conflict, Afghanistan remains the theatre of civil war. In the interests of national concord among Afghans, of the reconstruction of their homeland and of the peace and security of the entire region, we appeal to all the parties concerned to put an end to their conflicts.

On the Korean peninsula, there is still an atmosphere of mutual distrust in the military sphere. We welcome the tireless efforts made by all the countries concerned, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to ensure that the Korean peninsula is a nuclear-weapon-free zone. It would be in the highest interest of the entire north-east Asian region and of the world if peace, stability and cooperation were to be achieved.

In South-East Asia, the countries of the region generally enjoy good relations, and this is opening up a new era for the broadening of their cooperation, day by day, in many fields of shared interest. For the first time my own country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, participated as an observer in the Ministerial Meeting of the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), held recently in Singapore. We are pleased at this important meeting with the countries of ASEAN which has given new impetus to our joint efforts to promote cooperation in different fields among the peoples of the region.

Our delegation is also gratified by the historic events that have taken place in Cambodia, our immediate neighbour. The promulgation of the new constitution by His Majesty King Samdech Norodom Sihanouk and the establishment of a new Government in that country will open the way to peace, stability and national harmony, thus contributing to the strengthening of cooperation and friendship in the region.

In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, 1992 was a year of many achievements. Our gross national product increased by 7 per cent over 1991; our rate of inflation is 10 per cent, compared to 14 per cent in 1991; and the rate of exchange in general has stabilized. In other words, the multi-ethnic Lao people is seeing a gradual improvement in its standard of living. From a political standpoint, our country has experienced solid stability, and we intend vigorously to continue our effort to promote democracy and our people's collective decision-making power, in accordance with our country's historical and cultural realities and with its level of economic and social development.

At the beginning of 1993, the National Assembly endorsed our national plan for socio-economic development through the year 2000. Under this plan, the Lao Government has set for itself two major objectives.

The first is aimed at meeting the most urgent daily needs of our population, especially of the ethnic minorities that live in the mountainous regions; bringing about a gradual rise in their standard of living, both material and cultural; and ensuring political and social stability in the country.

The second is to promote the development of agriculture and forestry in concert with the development of services and of industry, especially in the field of hydropower, one of the areas of potential growth in our country; to develop more forcefully our market economy, create internal savings, stabilize State finances and work steadily towards financial autonomy; and to strengthen our efforts at development of human resources in order to create conditions conducive to national development in the immediate future and for the years to come.

In order to realize this plan, we will endeavour to achieve an average growth rate of 8 per cent, to maintain economic and financial balance, to preserve stability of prices and of rates of exchange, and to keep the inflation rate no higher than 10 per cent per year. The Government will continue its policy of broadening cooperation with other countries and in this regard hopes to have the support and assistance in all respects of the international community.

According to the United Nations World Economic Survey, production at the international level should increase by only 1.5 per cent this year and 3 per cent in 1994, compared with .6 per cent in 1992: a very weak recovery of growth in general terms. This weak recovery, especially in the industrialized countries, entails a continued decline in the demand for export goods from the developing countries and a more abrupt decline in the prices of their raw materials, which are of vital importance to their economies. Bearing in mind the interdependence of the components of the global economy, it would be wiser for the developed countries to attach greater importance to the developing countries and to commit themselves truly to international cooperation founded upon revitalization of the economy and development in the interests of all.

The problem of the environment, because of its importance in its relation to development, is still at the forefront of global concerns. We are still witnessing the pollution of our air, seas and oceans, abrupt climate changes, a steady depletion of the ozone layer, and desertification in many parts of the world. It is time for the developed countries and the developing countries to strengthen their international cooperation effectively and to take forceful measures to protect the environment, in accordance with their respective responsibilities and capacities and with the well-known Agenda 21, adopted in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

As for the drug problem, my delegation is pleased that the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly will devote special meetings to this subject. We intend to contribute to its consideration in view of the importance of this problem and its implications in the world at large and in our own country.

The question of promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms still occupies a central place on the international agenda. Because it is so important and so sensitive, this question requires serious consideration on the basis of the principles of non-selectivity, objectivity and impartiality. To this we should add that the historic, cultural, political, social, economic and religious realities of each country need to be taken into account. From this standpoint, we are on the whole satisfied with the results obtained at the recent World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna, Austria, from 14 to 25 June 1993.

With the end of bipolarization, it is important that States place their hopes in the United Nations, which is truly intended to be universal and institutional, capable of maintaining international peace and security, of promoting development and of having law and justice prevail the world over. So that it can live up to its new responsibilities, the Organization must also build its new structure. A revitalized, restructured United Nations made more democratic in its decision-making process, particularly in the Security Council, will certainly be able to play its rightful central role in the management of international affairs. States and peoples all over the world, large and small alike, powerful or weak, rich or poor, could benefit greatly from such a development.

Mr. ALLEYNE (Dominica): On behalf of the delegation of the Commonwealth of Dominica, I am honoured to congratulate you, Sir, and your country, the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. I am particularly pleased that this position is held this year, for the first time, by a national of a country that is a member of the Caribbean Community and I have no doubt that your intellect and wide experience as one of the Caribbean's most outstanding diplomats will ensure excellence in the performance of your duties. I assure you of the full cooperation of the delegation of the Commonwealth of Dominica in the conduct of the affairs of this General Assembly.

The Commonwealth of Dominica wishes to congratulate Andorra, the Czech Republic, Eritrea, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Monaco and the Slovak Republic on their admission to membership of the United Nations. The international community is, in the words of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali:

> "Humanity's best hope in the pursuit of peace, development and human rights". (*A/48/1, para. 513*)

We therefore welcome these new Members as they join in the commitment to world peace, development and support for democracy and human rights.

The universality of membership is an important principle of the United Nations. We believe that, in keeping with this principle and in accordance with the established pattern of parallel representation of divided countries in the United Nations, the exceptional case of the Republic of China on Taiwan should be seriously considered by the international community at the next session of the General Assembly. The Republic of China on Taiwan, with its rich natural and human resources could, if given the opportunity, make a significant contribution to the international community. Its people are also entitled to enjoy the rights enjoyed by all populations of the Members of this world body. The Commonwealth of Dominica therefore supports the efforts of the Republic of China on Taiwan to obtain full membership of the United Nations after being unable to participate for 22 years.

Permit me to congratulate Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on his ongoing reform efforts aimed at streamlining the operations of the United Nations. The state of the Organization's finances is an issue which should be of concern to all its Members. In that regard the Commonwealth of Dominica is making every effort to honour its financial commitments to the Organization.

As the international community takes on greater responsibilities in its efforts to establish a more stable world order, restructuring the Organization with improved cost effectiveness is becoming ever more critical. The

Organization must do its utmost to avoid wasting limited resources. However, the effect of cost-cutting on the interests of small developing countries needs to be examined closely. While the United Nations becomes more active in peace-keeping in various parts of the world, programmes aimed at assisting developing countries must not be allowed to suffer. We firmly believe that the right to development is an inalienable right, a right of every human person and of all peoples.

Dominica's economy is entirely dependent, at the present time, on the banana industry and on favoured access to our traditional markets in Europe. Our industry, vital to the survival of the Dominican people, is being threatened by the major banana producers of Latin America, although the Windward Islands industry accounts for only 2 per cent of the world's production of bananas. A threat to the banana industry in Dominica is also a threat to the fundamental human rights of its people as the collapse of this industry could lead to economic collapse, social upheaval and political disaster. The same prospect looms over the other Windward Islands of St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenada, with consequential effects on the other States of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Indeed, just last week we heard of serious unrest in St. Lucia as a direct consequence of adverse trends in banana prices. This is an augury of what could happen in any or all of the Windward Islands.

We call on the international community to support Dominica in its efforts to ensure the survival of its economy and the protection of its peoples' political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights. More particularly, I call on our Latin American neighbours to honour the spirit of the Declaration of Managua and to take into account the severely adverse impact on the economies of OECS States that their policies on bananas, not critical to their own economies, are likely to have on ours.

Democracy and human rights have been a priority of the world community since the inception of the United Nations. Over the years there has been much debate on the universality of human rights and its indivisibility from, and link to, development. The decision of the General Assembly, by its resolution 45/155, to convene the Vienna Conference to deal with crucial issues surrounding the promotion and protection of human rights was timely and significant. Dominica applauds the efforts of those who worked towards the success of this important and historic Conference. I am particularly proud of Dominica's participation in the preparatory process as well as in the World Conference, which is an indication of our full commitment to the universalization of respect for human rights and the preservation of democracy.

Representatives at the World Conference gave a clear signal that it is necessary to increase financial and other resources to the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and the regional Commissions in order to reinforce their ability to provide greater technical cooperation between the United Nations and regional and national human rights institutions. As the focal point for human rights activities of the United Nations and the primary organizational institution within the Secretariat for the implementation of the human rights programme, the Centre for Human Rights must be provided with adequate means for carrying out its mandate.

On the international scene, the breakthroughs made in the Middle East and South Africa must be celebrated. Recent decisions taken by the leaders of those countries are encouraging and augur well for the future. The Madrid peace process launched in 1991 has not been in vain. Dominica noted with great satisfaction and pleasure the signing of the peace agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization - an agreement which will serve to secure a firm foundation for the mutual recognition of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. We sincerely hope that this agreement will eventually bring an end to the persistent violence and conflict that have plagued the Middle East for over four decades.

One year ago in this body, Dominica called for constructive and open dialogue between the African National Congress and the Pretoria regime in an effort to arrive at an early agreement on majority rule in South Africa. President De Klerk and Nelson Mandela's recent actions are a clear indication of their interest in peaceful progress towards a truly just and democratic society in the affairs of that country.

The finalization of the demarcation of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq is a step towards the enhancement of stability and security in that region. We welcome the adoption of Security Council resolution 833 (1993), in which the inviolability of this boundary is guaranteed, and we call upon Iraq to respect the terms of the resolution.

It is indeed disheartening that while progress is being made in the protection of human rights in certain parts of the world, the rights of the people of our Caribbean sister island, Haiti, continue to be violated even after moves by members of the international community to suspend sanctions against Haiti. Dominica, acting on Security

Council resolution 861 (1993), ordered the immediate suspension of all sanctions against Haiti, following the confirmation of Robert Malval as Prime Minister.

The Governors Island Agreement of July 1993 offered a glimmer of hope for the restoration of democracy and constitutional order in that country and for the eventual return of President Aristide to power. These hopes were shattered by the actions of those who officially sanction violence, threatening the lives of constitutionally appointed officials. The members of the de facto regime must understand that the international community will not stand idly by if the terms of the Governors Island Agreement are not respected. If the parties in Haiti fail to comply in good faith with this Agreement, Dominica will be ready to reactivate sanctions in keeping with the United Nations resolution to that effect. We will also do whatever we can within our limited resources to contribute to the restoration of democracy in Haiti. In that regard, Dominica is willing to contribute to the civilian police and training contingent to Haiti to assist in the return of President Aristide to the full exercise of his constitutional office and the stabilization of Haiti. In the meantime, we support President Aristide's call for the immediate replacement of the Chief of Police, a precondition to the security of the officials of the legitimate regime in that country.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Somalia continues to be cause for concern to all those who support the promotion and protection of human rights. We deplore the human tragedy resulting from ethnic differences and more specifically the barbaric torture and killing of hundreds of innocent people. We also condemn recent events in Nigeria, which demonstrate a lack of respect for the wishes of the people and a violation of their rights to participate in the affairs of their country.

While we are focusing on the subject of human rights, it is fitting that we make reference to the International Year of the World's Indigenous People launched on 10 December 1992. The rights of indigenous people all over the world continue to be violated as they fight to preserve their culture and identity. This is of particular concern to us in Dominica as our country is one of the few countries with an indigenous Carib population, a courageous and hard-working people with a rich history and culture. I urge the international community to lend its support to programmes and activities designed to allow for the participation of our indigenous peoples and other minorities in every aspect of the life of our countries. We in the Caribbean should have a special interest in this matter when we recall that within 28 years of the arrival of Christopher Columbus in our part of the world, the entire indigenous population of the Bahamas had been wiped out by the European conquerors. The failure of the industrialized nations to contribute significantly to the special fund is a matter of deep regret, which can yet be reversed.

Dominica has played a vital role in the regional and international effort to include women fully in the development process and it hopes to participate in the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in 1995. We are particularly concerned about the needs and situations of our indigenous women and the necessity for special programmes to address these needs. I wish to express satisfaction at the establishment of a regional office of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in the Caribbean and look forward to its support and cooperation in all aspects of women's affairs.

General Assembly resolutions 46/91, 46/94 and 45/106 called for a set of global targets on ageing for the year 2001 to provide a pragmatic focus for the broad goals of the International Plan of Action and to accelerate implementation of the Plan. In accordance with the aforementioned resolutions, a National Committee on Ageing was established in Dominica. The Committee is responsible for developing a national plan of action and making inputs into a regional plan of action on ageing. We call on the international community to support programmes tailored to the needs of senior citizens in keeping with national policies.

The sustainability of life on our planet is dependent on the importance we place on conservation of the environment. Dominica reaffirms its political commitment made at the Earth Summit held last year to pursue sustainable development.

We have recently acceded to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its amendment, conventions which play a key role in the protection of our environment. Sustaining the environment is compatible with economic growth and development and is essential to sustainable development. However, it demands considerable additional resources which developing countries such as Dominica do not possess. We realize that we have an obligation to contribute to global solutions but additional finances are needed to assist in the many actions we will have to undertake to conserve the environment and follow sustainable developmental practices. We call on the international community to strengthen and give fuller

support to institutions such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which are concerned with assisting developing countries to achieve sustainable development. We also call on the industrialized countries to offer greater assistance to developing countries in the latter's efforts to make the transition to environmentally friendly technologies and economic activity. The industrialized countries of the world, which have disproportionately contributed to the environmental devastation that has occurred over the past 200 years, must take seriously their responsibility to contribute to the Global Environment Facility. The ability of developing countries to contribute to environmental sustainability depends on this.

Dominica welcomes the decision of the United Nations to organize the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in Barbados in 1994. We intend to participate fully in this laudable effort.

The United Nations now offers hope for a future of peace, security and development. Let us not allow our legitimate emphasis on peacemaking and peace-keeping to divert our attention from the equally legitimate demands of the developing world for development and security.

The delegation of Dominica salutes you, Mr. President, and wishes you a very successful presidency of this session of the General Assembly.

Mr. MALLET (Saint Lucia): May I at the outset extend to you, Sir, my own and my country's warmest congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Your assumption of the presidency is a singular honour for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). It marks the first occasion on which a person from that region has been elected to preside over the General Assembly. Your presence here in the Chair therefore provides added significance to the honour and privilege attached to the opportunity presented to my country, also a CARICOM State, to address this body. Knowing you as I do, Sir, I am certain that your experience, wisdom and diplomatic skills will guide our deliberations to successful and historic conclusions.

The end of the cold war and the movement towards democratization within the former Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe, accompanied by the new level of entente between the major Powers in the Security Council, have led to a new paramountcy of this Organization in the conduct of relations between nations. Many of the essential principles of the Charter, too long suppressed in the presence of super-Power rivalries, are now given the opportunity, within this more conducive environment, to assume the importance for which they were designed when first established as a product of the wisdom of the founding fathers of this Organization.

The tendency towards globalization in economic, if not in political, terms suggests an era within which consensus and mutuality of approach will be essential for furthering balanced and sustained global advancement. The ideal of universality within the framework of this Organization becomes even more important in this context. Now that the grim obstacles which oppose the concepts of equality and universality are being dismantled in South Africa, we are hopeful that that country will soon be able to take its place around this hearth of the family of nations.

It was also in furtherance of the spirit of universality and its all-embracing purpose that Saint Lucia joined 11 other Member States of the United Nations in proposing the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda aimed at obtaining General Assembly agreement for the establishment of an ad hoc committee to study the situation of the Republic of China in Taiwan. That study would have focused on the search for an equitable, rational and practical solution that would enable the Republic of China in Taiwan to become a full Member of the United Nations. Unfortunately, this new but overdue initiative suffered a temporary setback in the General Committee.

However, I find it difficult to envisage that a country of 21 million people, whose industriousness has contributed to making their country the fourteenth-largest trading nation in the world, can continue to be impeded from becoming a Member of this Organization, where they will be afforded the opportunity to discharge their international obligations more fully. In keeping with its belief in the concept of universality, Saint Lucia gives support to the Government and people of the Republic of China in Taiwan in their aspiration to become full Members of this world Organization.

For many years now, the problems associated with the Middle East have been considered intractable. That unforgettable handshake, beamed to us in Saint Lucia live by the wonders of satellite technology, was for us as much a symbol of relief as it was a signal of hope - relief that it perhaps marked the beginning of the end of the bloodshed, suffering and hostility which have so plagued that region, and hope that their end would bring us one step farther along the path towards global cooperation through which

the future of humanity may eventually be rescued from a world which has hitherto been seemingly drifting towards self-destruction. My country wishes to convey its congratulations to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman Yasser Arafat on this bold and courageous step in the cause of peace against odds which, until then, seemed insurmountable. It is Saint Lucia's wish that this event will ignite the spark which kindles a beacon of peace to light the region along its way to realization of its fullest potential.

The heroic efforts of President F.W. de Klerk and African National Congress President Nelson Mandela in South Africa must also be praised. They have remained unintimidated by violence and endemic opposition in single-mindedly spearheading the creation of the Transitional Executive Council, which at long last gives an official say to a majority too long disenfranchised by official oppressive dictate. This progress allows Saint Lucia fully to support the lifting of the remaining sanctions, as called for by Mr. Mandela. With the recent agreement on Walvis Bay and the expectation that free and fair elections will be held in April next year, perhaps we can soon bring to a close this sad chapter of our history.

However, Saint Lucia is less sanguine over the situation in some other countries of Africa. The world recession has had an adverse effect on export revenues and therefore on their foreign-exchange earnings and debt-settlement ability. In addition, political strife has tended to exacerbate these difficulties. The success of globalization in its promotion of world economic growth depends on development which is shared. It is important that, in the understandable enthusiasm to do everything possible to assist with the transformation of previously centrally managed economies, Africa not be allowed to become a casualty of the ended cold war.

Saint Lucia welcomes the finalization of the demarcation of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq, which was accomplished by the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission on 20 May this year. We also welcome the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 833 (1993), by which it guaranteed the inviolability of the boundary between the two States. This guarantee will serve as a deterrent against future conflict between Kuwait and Iraq. It will also enhance stability and security in the region. We call upon Iraq to respect the terms of Security Council resolution 833 (1993) and other relevant Security Council resolutions.

The firm resolve which this Organization, particularly the Security Council, has shown in dealing with the problems of the long-suffering people of Haiti is to be commended. Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 45/2 of 10 October 1990, the United Nations has continued to reflect the international community's concern and will in its several action-oriented decisions culminating in the adoption of Security Council resolution 867 (1993) on 23 September of this year to deploy both military and paramilitary forces in Haiti. With a return to democracy and the application of the economic recovery programme envisaged by the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, it is hoped that Haiti will at last begin to experience the economic development which has for so long eluded it and which is an absolute imperative for alleviating the long suffering of its people.

Saint Lucia is happy to have been able to contribute actively to the process of democratization in Haiti. A team of more than 30 Saint Lucians helped with the organization of the electoral process and assisted in monitoring the elections. Some 15 Saint Lucians are today serving as monitors of human-rights abuses in that country. Saint Lucia is therefore deeply anxious that the restructuring and recovery process in Haiti should succeed, and we urge the international community to maintain solidarity with President Jean-Bertrand Aristide as he returns home to resume the mantle of leadership of his country.

Saint Lucia is a small Caribbean developing island State. If developing countries in general are in jeopardy, then small Caribbean developing island countries are exposed to double jeopardy. We are all trapped in an international economic system which yields no quarter to the problems and needs that are peculiar to us, and additionally insists upon using a continental measuring rod as a gauge of our development processes. Like castaways set adrift on the world's oceans, we have for some time been desperately trying to catch the ears of those who happily stand on solid ground. But our voices have somehow failed to carry in the face of the biting winds of global change which have, almost overnight, altered the very environment within which we have been conditioned by history to survive.

It is true that the small Caribbean island developing countries have in some cases registered important development gains over the past 10 to 15 years, a period which marks the attainment of sovereignty for these small developing countries. But the gains, where they do exist, have been achieved only by Herculean effort and should not be interpreted as evidence that particular or even special consideration in the granting of economic and technical assistance is not now still needed to promote sustained development. These gains are to be seen, rather,

in the context of the maxim: "One should help those who try to help themselves". The graduation of the small Caribbean island developing countries from the World Bank's "soft window" into net contributor status within the United Nations Development Programme - a graduation determined solely on the basis of an index of per capita income - is in our case tantamount to helping a drowning man onto a raft and then setting him adrift without a paddle.

Apart from having average per capita incomes that are only two-thirds that of developing countries in general, the small Caribbean island developing countries are burdened, as a factor of scale of operations, by administrative costs which are proportionately three times as high as that of continental developing countries. With our natural resources limited in quantity as well as diversity, the odds between success and failure become marginal and purely a matter of the quality of administration. Where no resource surpluses exist, little room is left for mistakes. Yet, because of our small national budgets and disproportionately high administrative costs, we often find ourselves unable to afford the diversity and quality of expertise required to broaden the odds.

In the case of my country, Saint Lucia, this already precarious economic situation is now compounded by a direct attack on the sole item of domestic exports which virtually keeps us from sinking into the depths of economic despair. As a primary agricultural state, Saint Lucia is the largest producer of bananas in the eastern Caribbean. As used here, however, "largest" is an extremely relative term. World annual banana production is currently about 10 million tons, of which the small States of the Windward Islands, comprising Dominica, Grenada, Saint Vincent and Saint Lucia, produce less than 300,000, Saint Lucia producing about half of that quantity. Over 50 per cent of the working populations of these islands work in banana-associated enterprises. Both in Dominica and Saint Lucia, more than 50 per cent of export earnings is derived from banana exports. Our agricultural production is completely in the hands of many small private farmers. There is no Government banana-production ownership and there are no latifundia. Because of topographical constraints that adversely affect production costs, our banana industry has been assisted to survive primarily through the umbrella of modest preferential arrangements made available under the various Lomé Conventions.

Today, there are forces at work, urged on by multinational business interests, which would seek to wrest from us even the minuscule share - just 2 per cent of the market - which has enabled our economies barely to weather an increasingly hostile economic environment. In order to attempt to secure that end, they have also mounted initiatives in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), in the European Court and within various international forums. Apart from the serious social consequences which cannot but follow a demise of the banana industry in these islands, it is also to be recognized that, in order to purchase goods and services from those very sources which advocate measures calculated to bring about that demise, we must first earn the foreign exchange to be able to do this. It can only be hoped that, in the end, sympathetic understanding will prevail over intransigence in the determination of this vital issue.

In this post-cold-war era, ideological considerations have given way to political initiatives in the determination of the direction of official-aid flows. The weight given to foreign policy in deciding on foreign-aid flows means that assistance is not always necessarily directed towards areas of greater need, but is directed, rather, to areas with issues which are politically topical. With a modest per capita income which threatens the little remaining access it has to concessionary assistance, with official financial flows directed elsewhere, and with the main export commodity under attack, Saint Lucia is left to wonder whether there is in existence a concerted intention to marginalize small island countries or whether it is merely the accident of present world conditions that bears this responsibility. In any event, the effect remains the same.

Political gain cannot be sustained in the absence of complementary economic progress. Where world economic advancement is isolated in its impact, political gain in world terms will continue to prove transitory and incapable of being sustained. It is true that the world has seen an impressive political transformation in a rather brief period of time in terms of a transition to democracy and a new degree of cooperation in the United Nations at the level of the Security Council. But if the price of these political gains is an exacerbated marginalization of the small developing countries, they will undoubtedly soon be dissipated in a sea of economic troubles and the social disruption which experience suggests must follow as a consequence.

The urgency of the international debt crisis may have been defused, but developing-country debt, after reaching a brief plateau, is again on the rise, approaching $1.5 trillion. This situation is made more difficult by the drag on world economic output, which is being caused partly by the dislocation of economies of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. An expansion of world trade, coupled with the recovery of commodity prices, lies at the

region and are looking to participate in economic-cooperation initiatives within the Americas and elsewhere.

Population growth in the developing countries, too, though it has maintained a relatively steady rate for over a decade, continues to increase in numerical terms, accounting for 93 per cent global population growth, which is now about 93 million annually. The balance between economic and population growth must be stabilized in the interest of human progress.

We approach the twenty-first century with world changes which have been as rapid as they have been bewildering. The ensuing challenge which lies before small countries such as ours, daunting as it is because of our slender resources, is to develop the necessary resilience to enable us to adapt to these changes. I am of the view that incorporated within the idea of universality is the concept of common progress and the need to ensure that an environment is created within which world-embracing advancement becomes possible.

In this context, the United Nations cannot be expected to micro-manage global change; as the pre-eminent global Organization, its resources must be enhanced to allow it to play an even greater role as a fulcrum, both in the traditional spheres of activity and in new areas created by the new order of things. The United Nations is, accordingly, seen as playing an expanded role in the economic welfare of developing countries, including the development and application of further initiatives to address constraints imposed by smallness and island status.

We look forward to the Secretary-General's agenda for development, with the expectation that it will seek to address the new problems and challenges which have arisen even as some of the old issues have been, or are in the process of being, put to bed.

Let me assure the Assembly of Saint Lucia's pledge to continue to cooperate fully within the institutions of the Organization to further its objectives for the betterment of humanity. What we lack in financial resources we can perhaps make up in human resources. The fact that Saint Lucia has produced two Nobel laureates in this generation is indicative, I believe, of our ability to cooperate in the common pursuit of the noble purposes of this esteemed Organization.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

26th PLENARY MEETING
Tuesday, 12 October 1993 at 10 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Agenda item 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

Mrs. des Iles (Trinidad and Tobago): It is with immense pride that I congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of the Government and the people of Trinidad and Tobago, on your unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Your election to this important position is a tribute to the active and constructive role played by Guyana in international affairs over the years. It is also a tribute to your own personal integrity and diplomatic acumen. As a fellow representative of a member State of the Caribbean Community, I am confident that you will bring to the deliberations ahead the necessary measure of impartiality and astuteness that will be indispensable in reconciling the differing views on the many complex issues before us.

My delegation joins in welcoming the six newest Members admitted into this family of nations in 1993: Andorra, the Czech Republic, Eritrea, Monaco, the Slovak Republic and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. These new Members, all of which are relatively small, can draw some inspiration from the election to the presidency of the General Assembly of a representative from Guyana, the smallest developing country in terms of population, ever to assume that position. For indeed, small States must continue to be afforded every opportunity to be full and active contributors to the collective search for peace, security and economic and social advancement for all.

All States, particularly the more vulnerable among us, can derive much hope and encouragement from the developments of September 1993, which set the course for a new relationship between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and improved prospects for peace in the Middle East. The historic exchange of letters of recognition between Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman Yasser Arafat, and the subsequent signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, which extends limited interim self-government to the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and in Jericho in the West Bank, constitute a momentous development in the turbulent and violent history of the region.

Who among us could have anticipated that, in the midst of current growing tensions and conflicts worldwide, such sworn enemies in the perennial theatre of conflict in the Middle East would have conceded so much in the pursuit of a better future? In today's troubled times, these bold partners in peace have renewed the faith of many the world over in the capacity of diplomacy, political will and enlightened self-interest to overcome decades of hatred, mistrust and fear. We all recognize the tremendous difficulties and challenges ahead. Trinidad and Tobago wishes these leaders well and urges active United Nations involvement in assisting all parties concerned in a smooth transition from a state of belligerence to one of cooperation and peaceful co-existence. Given the centrality of the Palestinian question to the conflict in the Middle East, all parties need to work indefatigably to translate this initial success into a comprehensive and durable peace for the region.

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A similar concerted response on the part of the United Nations and the international community will be imperative in assisting the people of South Africa in their transition to a united, democratic, non-racial South Africa. After more than 45 years of anguished attention to the despair, suffering and injustice in that country, the provision of token measures of assistance would be unacceptable.

If the world is to give any credence to the United Nations new thrust towards post-conflict peace-building, a tangible commitment to the success of the transition in South Africa needs to be made. We therefore join the call for an enhanced United Nations presence in South Africa, a presence that is urgently needed prior to the elections of April 1994. Trinidad and Tobago is taking the necessary steps to implement the decision taken on 8 October by the Assembly to lift economic sanctions against South Africa (resolution 48/1). It is our hope that the international community will respond positively and generously to this historic decision; and that it will quickly lead to the provision of ample financial and technical assistance, as well as to appropriate investments, that will allow a new non-racial Government to begin redressing the grave inequalities in all aspects of life in South Africa. We also hope that, in time, the advancement of greater economic and social equity in South Africa will mitigate, and eventually resolve, other problems that are the legacy of apartheid, including the rampant and widespread violence which threatens the process of transformation in the country.

Over the years the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago have faithfully monitored the progress of the South African people on their arduous journey to this critical point in their history. We have adhered assiduously to the various sanctions and other restrictive measures adopted against South Africa by the United Nations. Within our limited means we have also extended a helping hand to the victims of apartheid. Trinidad and Tobago has shared in the anguish of South Africans in their long struggle against the racist system of apartheid. We will also rejoice with them in their victory as we anxiously await the dawn of a free, just, non-racial and prosperous society in South Africa.

Here at the United Nations let us seek to emulate the courage and statesmanship recently demonstrated by the major political actors in the Middle East and South Africa. We too must seize the opportunities for peace and seek to employ fully the machinery at our disposal in the active pursuit of a better future. Amid the growing anxieties and insecurities pervading many societies, member States have a collective responsibility to the millions around the globe who continue to repose much faith and hope in this Organization and its ability to address successfully the myriad political, economic, environmental and social problems now confronting us all. Trinidad and Tobago therefore joins in celebrating a reinvigorated United Nations, which is seeking to have a more meaningful impact on the lives of the world's peoples.

Trinidad and Tobago applauds the heightened involvement of the United Nations in the effort to restore democracy to Haiti and to secure the safe return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to the helm of a legitimate constitutional government. The United Nations, with its active involvement in the organization of the 1990 elections in Haiti, facilitated the free expression by the Haitian people of their unfulfilled dreams and yearnings for freedom and a decent standard of life. It is therefore only fitting that this Organization, with the consent of the legitimate government of Haiti, should provide maximum support to efforts to guarantee a peaceful return to democracy and national reconciliation in that country, without which those dreams would not be realized.

Trinidad and Tobago is concerned at the serious deterioration in the situation in Haiti since the welcome signing in July of this year of the Governors Island Agreement and the New York Pact. We deplore the flagrant violations of human rights and the blood-letting, which must be stopped. We express the hope that international efforts to establish a new police force in Haiti and to professionalize its armed forces will lead to greater guarantees of life and liberty in Haiti. My delegation takes this opportunity to commend the Special Envoy for Haiti, Mr. Dante Caputo, as well as the able staff of the international Civilian Mission in Haiti for their invaluable contribution towards resolving the crisis.

Developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Somalia are among the more worrisome of those in which the United Nations has been involved, particularly in view of the Organization's inability to stem the tide of violence and suffering. United Nations interventions in these areas are also increasingly being regarded as test cases for the new United Nations of the post-cold-war era.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the horror and savagery of the persistent attacks on innocent civilians, particularly on the Muslim population, have elicited entirely inadequate responses from the international community. Notwithstanding the efforts of the United Nations Protection Force and the various international and non-governmental humanitarian organizations, thousands continue to starve, are expelled from their homes and

regions, or perish at the hands of perpetrators of genocide and "ethnic cleansing". Yet, despite threats of punishment on the part of the Security Council, these and other atrocities are committed with impunity, while violent attempts to dismember the sovereign State of Bosnia and Herzegovina persist. The United Nations can ill afford to fail Bosnia and Herzegovina, for that failure will have serious repercussions in the region and beyond, as well as repercussions for the Organization.

We have also witnessed alarming developments in Somalia. In the early stages of United Nations involvement in the country it was faced with a unique combination of factors, including massive starvation and famine, widespread violence, the ready availability among the populace of weaponry of varying sophistication, and a total absence of any centralized authority. Today, with the assistance of the United Nations and other organizations, Somalis of good will can be proud of the successes achieved in breaking the backbone of the devastating famine and in making significant, though limited, strides towards the restoration of civil government and political reconciliation.

It is impossible, however, to be oblivious to the major military engagements in the Somali capital of Mogadishu, which have led to tragic loss of life and have seriously imperilled the United Nations operation in that limited area. Trinidad and Tobago deplores the vicious attacks on the peace-keeping forces of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II), which could ultimately derail efforts to restore peace and security to the country and frustrate the attainment by the Somali people of their goals and aspirations.

We also support the call for urgent steps to be taken to ensure the safety and security of the tens of thousands of men and women who are engaged in these difficult and dangerous United Nations peace-keeping operations around the world.

The extent of human suffering and instability now being experienced as a consequence of general economic stagnation is as disconcerting and disheartening as that visited upon us by war and strife. Many communities are in the midst of economic and social crisis. Poverty, unemployment and crime are increasingly threatening the very fabric of societies and are clamouring for the concerted attention of the international community. The United Nations must heed this call since, as stated by the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali:

> "social peace is as important as strategic or political peace". (*A/47//277, para. 59*)

This issue is of utmost importance to Trinidad and Tobago, which has not been spared the ravaging effects of a decline in economic activity. The price of the single product which represents the mainstay of our economy, and which accounts for more than 40 per cent of government revenue and over 80 per cent of foreign exchange earnings, has been in steady decline. This reality, and the structural adjustment policies which have had to be implemented in support of long-term development, have resulted in serious dislocations in the short term. The ranks of the unemployed have grown to approximately 20 per cent and there is an increasing need to provide safety nets for the more vulnerable in this society at a time when government revenue continues to fall.

Further, Trinidad and Tobago's very capacity to provide sufficient social services to those not in a position to make the burdensome sacrifices required of the general population has also been severely hampered by onerous debt-servicing payments. These challenges which we are experiencing in Trinidad and Tobago are widely shared by other developing countries.

The same spirit of cooperation and activism which now characterizes the United Nations approach to political and security questions must also impel the international community to address economic and social questions with an equal sense of urgency. The United Nations agenda for development, which the Secretary-General has been mandated to prepare, must be given priority attention in the year ahead. In this context, and with the aim of forging a new partnership in the quest for solutions to global economic problems, it may be opportune to consider the convening of a world economic summit.

Trinidad and Tobago is of the view that the United Nations agenda for development should not be restricted to providing guidelines for future action by the United Nations in the economic and social sectors. It should also include recommendations for strengthening the capacity of this Organization to enhance international cooperation in these fields and to promote the advancement of developing countries.

At its forty-seventh session the General Assembly reaffirmed that development is a shared responsibility. If our collective war on poverty, disease, unemployment and other challenges to development is to succeed, it must also be undertaken on the basis of a true partnership, a

partnership involving individuals, States, regional and international organizations and non-governmental entities, for we must engender a sense of inclusion among all of society's economic and social actors, while giving due recognition to their respective roles and responsibilities.

However, Trinidad and Tobago also shares the perspective of the Secretary-General, as stated in his 1993 report on the work of the Organization, that

> "States and their sovereignty are increasingly recognized as indispensable building-blocks of international order and problem-solving." *(A/48/1, para. 13)*

While all credible entities should be allowed to contribute to their greatest potential towards our shared objectives, States must not be deprived of the proper tools of governance and the opportunity to utilize them effectively on the basis of considered national strategies and priorities.

The concept of partnership must apply equally to the area of development finance and to trade. As regards the latter, Trinidad and Tobago has steered the steady course of trade liberalization but, like many other developing nations, has encountered persistent restrictions in the markets of the industrialized countries. It is hoped that the formation of mega-trading blocs will not compound these difficulties further.

We witnessed the application of the principle of global partnership in the convening of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the adoption of Agenda 21 in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. To date the first important steps have been taken towards the implementation of the comprehensive programme of activities for sustainable development contained in Agenda 21. The 1994 Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States presents the next important opportunity for the international community to demonstrate the continued political will to fulfil the commitments undertaken at the Earth Summit in 1992.

For small island nations like Trinidad and Tobago, this Global Conference, to be held in Barbados in April of next year, is critical to our efforts to forge, with the assistance of the international community, appropriate strategies for the implementation of Agenda 21, as it pertains to our specific situation. We strongly believe that small States should not be penalized for their limited capacity to inflict major damage on the global environment. Positive recognition should instead be given to their greater propensity for attracting a disproportionate share of environmental damage. Trinidad and Tobago hopes that adequate concessional funds will be provided for the sustainable-development activities of the small island developing States, as an important complement to initiatives taken at the national and regional levels.

The urgency that developing countries, such as my own, attach to the elaboration of the proposed agenda for development signals the importance we attach to achieving a proper balance in the level of resources devoted to political and security questions and those allocated to economic and social programmes. The World Conference on Population and Development in 1994, the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 and the preparations for these Conferences, will also contribute significantly to a strengthened economic and social agenda within the United Nations.

In addition, it is our hope that substantive preparations for the 1995 World Summit for Social Development will reinforce the importance of focusing on the ultimate objective of our development policies and programmes: the well-being and advancement of people.

Trinidad and Tobago intends to follow closely the high-level plenary discussions to be held on international cooperation in the fight against drug abuse and illicit drug-trafficking. Our country has fallen victim to the increased transit of illegal drugs through its territory. As is often the case, increased levels of illicit trafficking have led to widespread drug abuse and an accompanying rise in other crimes. We note that this problem continues to plague a growing number of nations and therefore urge that higher priority be given to the United Nations programmes designed to combat this menace.

The United Nations has not been provided with the financial resources needed to implement its legislative mandates. We have now exhausted some of the funds from which relief was frequently obtained in past years, resulting in a serious threat to the daily operations of the Organization. However, while it will be readily agreed that any organization must be provided with the resources it needs to carry out its functions, it must also be admitted that there is a growing imbalance between the demands being made upon the United Nations and the ability of a growing number of States to meet the cost of these demands. This is particularly the case with the peace-keeping budget, which in 1993 is expected to be almost three times the amount of the regular budget.

The United Nations is now in a critical period of adjustment and reorientation. Trinidad and Tobago

concurs with the view that there must be improvements in the administrative and operational performance of the United Nations in all its activities. Transparency and accountability must be the watchwords of the Organization.

As we approach our fiftieth anniversary, we the States Members of the United Nations must remain steadfast in our support for the fundamental purposes and principles which have promoted order and security in the world community. We must also meet the challenges and grasp the opportunities presented by the altered global environment. Let us forge ahead, confident in our ability to work together and to succeed in advancing the cause of peace and development.

Mr. Gyaw (Myanmar): I wish at the outset to extend to you, Sir, my congratulations on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Your election reflects the Assembly's full confidence in you. My delegation feels sure that we can count on your wide experience and personal skills to guide our deliberations to a fruitful conclusion. Allow me also to take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, for his tireless efforts to ensure the success of the forty-seventh session.

I am pleased to see among us delegations from the six new Member States which joined the Organization this year. Their presence in this Hall reflects the momentous changes taking place in the world today and the growing confidence in the United Nations itself. My delegation feels that these new Members, each with its own distinctive historical, cultural and political backgrounds, will have important contributions to make to the Organization. My delegation welcomes them all and looks forward to working with them.

It is an outstanding feature of our times that the number of sovereign States has increased and that the role of the Organization has grown enormously. There is today a remarkable growth in the demand for the services of the United Nations. As noted by the Secretary-General, the Organization has in the past four years become involved in as many peace-keeping operations as it had in the previous four decades. The United Nations is increasingly called upon to pour oil on troubled waters. Its peace-keeping missions are being carried out across the globe, from Somalia to Cambodia, and its agencies for development and humanitarian affairs have fanned out even further afield. As the United Nations assumes a more central role in the area of international security, it is essential that the Organization, in pursuit of the purposes stated in Article 1, act and be seen to act in accordance with the principles of the Charter. Myanmar would like to believe that in the post-cold-war era, States will adhere strictly to the Charter's principles and make concerted efforts to establish a workable system of collective security. Just as the prohibition of the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State is fundamental in inter-State relations, the Charter unambiguously prohibits, in the well-known paragraph 7 of Article 2, any intervention of the United Nations itself "in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State". This prohibition applies equally to States and to other international organizations. In this time of major political and economic changes in a volatile world, extraordinary care should be taken to uphold such basic principles as respect for the territorial integrity or political independence of States.

Myanmar fully supports the Security Council's recommendation of 28 May 1993, which states that the Council considers that United Nations peace-keeping operations should be conducted in accordance with operational principles consistent with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. Those operational principles include a clear political goal with a precise mandate subject to periodic review and to change in its character or duration only by the Council itself; the consent of the Government and, where appropriate the parties concerned, save in exceptional cases; support for a political process or for the peaceful settlement of the dispute; and impartiality in implementing Security Council decisions.

The experience in Somalia underscores the need to adhere to those principles in all peace-keeping and peacemaking operations. In particular, it underscores the need to exercise great prudence in sanctioning the use of force in such operations and in its application on the ground. It has also shown that peace-keeping operations cannot succeed without the willing cooperation of all the parties concerned.

The conscience of the world has been troubled by the horror of the ongoing conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While it is true that the United Nations has taken some action in response to the crisis and that negotiations have been initiated in Geneva, much more needs to be done to stop the fighting and find a peaceful solution. The situation is complex but it must be realized that innocent men, women and children in the besieged towns and villages expect more of an international Organization whose principal purpose is the maintenance of international peace and security. Unless appropriate actions are taken,

the United Nations runs the risk of being seen as protecting only certain countries or interests.

My delegation is pleased to note that in Cambodia, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia has successfully discharged its main responsibility of supervising, monitoring and verifying the cease-fire and of organizing and conducting free and fair elections as scheduled, despite the decision of one of the Cambodian parties to stay away from the elections. The United Nations efforts to foster a democratic process and to bring back peace and stability to a country ravaged by two decades of civil strife and war is an outstanding achievement. We should like to take this opportunity to pay a warm and special tribute to Mr. Yasushi Akashi, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who handled a very delicate situation with great prudence and tact. This achievement has made it possible for the people of Cambodia to promulgate a new Constitution restoring the monarchy and to form a broadly based Government. The accession to the throne of Cambodia by His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk, a great patriot and statesman, is a historic event which augurs well for the rebuilding of a peaceful, unified and democratic Cambodia. As close neighbours, we look forward to peace and stability in Cambodia and to working closely with the Government and the people of Cambodia.

The effort to end apartheid in South Africa, sustained over decades, has produced positive results. The announcement of an election date, 27 April 1994, for the first general elections in South Africa's history based on universal franchise is a significant achievement. The elections will provide the black majority the opportunity to shape its own destiny by participating in a process which it had hitherto been denied. It is our hope that this will ensure that the objective of the people of South Africa for a democratic, non-racial and united South Africa will be achieved. Much, however, remains to be done to maintain the election timetable, and the next six months will be critical in ending apartheid. We note that four pieces of legislation - the Independent Electoral Commission, the Independent Media Commission, the Independent Broadcasting Authority and the Transitional Executive Council - have been adopted by both the Negotiating Council and the South African Parliament. We hope that these bodies will be established as soon as possible to guide the country through the constitutional process.

I am happy to note that the winds of change blowing across our world have not left the Middle East untouched. The historic agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization on mutual recognition has effectively removed a major obstacle to peace in that region. We welcome this positive step and the signing of the Declaration of Principles, which envisions self-rule by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and in Jericho. We are also pleased to note that Israel and Jordan have signed the agreed common agenda of the peace negotiations between them. We congratulate all parties concerned for displaying rare courage and mutual accommodation in reaching the accords. These important steps, we hope, will open the way to reconciliation between neighbours and to the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

The new climate of cooperation between the United States of America and the Russian Federation opens up at least the prospect of real progress in disarmament. This is amply demonstrated by the signing of the chemical weapons Convention in Paris earlier this year by an unprecedented number of countries. Myanmar was part of the Geneva Conference process leading to that comprehensive instrument, and continues to take an active part in the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

The increased attention we have been devoting to chemical weapons should not distract us from nuclear disarmament issues, notably from the need to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime and to ban all nuclear testing. The enormous quantities of nuclear material that exist in the world today and the increasing difficulty of detecting the clandestine development of nuclear weapons underscore the need to redouble efforts to strengthen safeguards against proliferation. Myanmar will work with other delegations for the success of the 1995 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review and extension Conference.

With the end of the Cold War, the case for reducing the number of large strategic nuclear weapons is strong. The United States and Russia should reduce their forces more drastically than they agreed to in START II and refrain from improving their nuclear arsenals both qualitatively and quantitatively. Meanwhile every effort must be made to fulfill the commitment undertaken in the 1963 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water. A comprehensive ban on nuclear testing has been a long-standing objective of the international community, including Myanmar. We hope that this objective will be achieved at the earliest possible date, preferably before the NPT review and extension Conference convenes.

The global economic recovery remains high on the international agenda. In a highly interdependent global economy, the prosperity and growth of the developed and the developing countries are intertwined. We therefore welcome the statement of the Group of Seven at the Tokyo Summit which recognizes that sustainable development and integration of the developing countries into the world economy is essential for global peace and prosperity. We look forward to the concretization of the commitment by the Group of Seven to pursue a comprehensive approach covering aid, trade, investment and debt strategy.

Debt strategy, in our view, should not be carried out on a case-by-case basis. It should be comprehensive for all debtor countries. We are encouraged by the statement that the major industrialized countries are determined to curb protectionism and that no recourse will be made to initiatives and arrangements that threaten to undermine the open multilateral system. High priority must be given to the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round. The Punta del Este Declaration is still valid, as are the provisions therein on special and differential treatment for the developing countries.

We have always subscribed to the view that the United Nations occupies a unique position as a major forum for the promotion of international cooperation for development. It has now been universally recognized that world peace and security, to be enduring must be underpinned by economic and social development worldwide. In this regard we share your view, Mr. President, that "An Agenda for Peace" must now be complemented by "An Agenda for Development". We ardently hope that deliberations on this topic at the current session of the General Assembly will lead to enhanced international cooperation for development, thereby contributing to global economic recovery and international peace.

In Myanmar we believe that political progress and economic development are interdependent and that both are vital to the well-being of the country. For this reason we have been endeavouring to ensure political stability while promoting economic reforms. Last year I stated here that steps were being taken to convene a National Convention in order to formulate guidelines for a firm and enduring constitution.I am now happy to report that the National Convention commenced work on 9 January of this year. The Convention is an essential prerequisite for the building of a democratic society in Myanmar, and its significance can hardly be overemphasized. It has the participation of nearly 700 delegates comprising elected representatives, representatives of the national races, political parties, peasants, workers, intelligentsia and technocrats, State service personnel, and specially invited persons. There is universal agreement that the objectives of the Convention should be to uphold the principles of non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of national sovereignty; to nurture the universal values of justice, liberty and equality; and to enable the *Tatmadaw*, the Myanmar Defence Services, to participate in a leading role in national politics.

Following intensive deliberations, agreement has been reached on the chapter on the fundamental principles of the State, which is of paramount importance as it embodies the essence of the new constitution. Following extensive discussions, consensus has also been reached on these Fundamental Principles. In a period of nine months much has been accomplished. Much of course remains to be done. The Convention is presently in recess in order to provide time for the delegates to make necessary preparations for the next phase, which will commence on 18 January 1994.

The delegates to the Convention have had the opportunity to study the Constitutions of various countries so that they may cull the best from around the world. However, there can be no single model that can be copied and superimposed on Myanmar. The constitution to be drafted must be in harmony with our own conditions and reflect the wishes and aspirations of the entire nation. The history of the modern nation of Myanmar is synonymous with the history of the *Tatmadaw*. Since the time of our struggle for national independence it has been in the forefront of national politics. On four occasions since independence when the country's national sovereignty and independence were threatened, the *Tatmadaw* was called upon to shoulder national responsibilities to protect and safeguard the nation. The *Tatmadaw* does not covet power. Nor does it have any desire to hold on to the reins of power. It is above party politics. However, as it represents the single disciplined organization in the nation it is incumbent upon it to play a leading role in national politics, safeguarding the nation, national unity and national sovereignty.

On the economic front, efforts are being made to ensure a smooth transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy. Now that teething pains have been overcome the economy is on the mend. It is significant that the gross domestic product grew by 10.9 per cent in 1992-1993. The private sector, which only a few years ago was almost non-existent, is expanding. Today there are a growing number of investors, both local and foreign, in fisheries, mining, oil exploration,

manufacturing and various other sectors. Major offshore oil and gas finds in our waters have also heightened interest among friends and neighbours in establishing mutually beneficial economic cooperation.

The political and economic changes are evidenced by the vast transformations taking place in much of the country. In both urban and rural areas, as well as in the border regions, there is unprecedented infrastructure building: schools, hospitals and dispensaries, as well as railways, roads, bridges and multi-purpose dams, are going up everywhere. That the people's living standards are rising is plain for all disinterested observers to see.

In spite of the positive political and economic changes taking place in Myanmar, some continue to point an accusing finger at us in regard to human rights. It bears repeating that when we speak of human rights, the diversity of our people's historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must neither be minimized nor forgotten. There is no unique model of implementation of human rights that can be superimposed on a given country. Any attempt to do so would only spell chaos. If parts of the international community are now beginning to contemplate the use of the issue of human rights as a pretext for intervening in domestic affairs of States, they will only undermine the very rights they wish to protect and promote.

Poverty is one of the most pressing human rights issues in our world today, and that is what we should seek to overcome. In Myanmar we are giving priority to the elimination of poverty and the narrowing of the gap between the rich and the poor, the city dwellers and the rural folk. We are redoubling our efforts to ensure that all citizens have equal opportunity in their access to food, housing, transportation, employment, education and health services.

On our western borders, over 40,000 returnees from Bangladesh have been systematically received and returned to their hearth and home. This is the result of the good-neighbourly relations that exist between Myanmar and Bangladesh. In accordance with the agreement reached between the two countries in April 1992, we will continue to receive those who are eligible to come as soon as their cases can be processed by the authorities concerned in the camps. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mrs. Sadako Ogata, who visited Myanmar recently, has been fully briefed on the important measures we have taken. A memorandum of understanding between Myanmar and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will be signed shortly; it will provide for the latter's presence on the Myanmar side of the border. We understand the need to find a lasting solution to the complex problem of transborder migration for economic or environmental reasons, and to that end we intend to hold consultations with our Bangladeshi friends.

It has been our consistent policy to cooperate fully with the United Nations in every field, including human rights. Not only have we furnished information sought by various United Nations bodies dealing with human rights; we also received in 1992 the Special Rapporteur appointed by the Commission on Human Rights, Mr. Yozo Yokota. We will receive him yet again this year to demonstrate our good will. It is our hope that Myanmar's traditional respect for human rights as well as the remarkable changes taking place throughout the length and breadth of the country - from the cities and towns to the border areas - will be seen and appreciated.

Through the constructive measures taken in the past five years, 10 terrorist groups have now returned to the legal fold. Just last week, as the result of negotiations held between the Government and Kachin national leaders in a spirit of mutual accommodation and understanding as befits blood brothers, the Kachin terrorist group returned to the legal fold and has already joined hands with the Government in promoting peace and prosperity in the Kachin state. Just as the representatives of the nine preceding groups are actively participating in the National Convention, the representatives of this group, too, will enjoy the same rights. It augurs well for the peace and unity of our country that these 10 terrorist groups which have renounced the use of force have been reintegrated into the national mainstream.

The return of our prodigal sons from 10 different national races gives the lie to allegations that minority groups in Myanmar are being oppressed, that their human rights are being grossly violated and that democracy is non-existent in the country. Never before in the history of independent Myanmar have so many terrorist groups returned to the legal fold in such numbers. That they have done so is unmistakable testimony to the complete trust and confidence which the national races have in the policy of national reconciliation espoused by the State Law and Order Restoration Council and in its good will and sincerity. Few Governments can claim such positive achievements.

The problem of illicit drugs is like a cancer that poses a great threat to the stability and well-being not only of our country but also of the international community. Myanmar remains steadfast in its resolve to overcome this scourge.

We realize that the problem of illicit drugs and trafficking transcends borders and is too complex to be tackled by any country acting alone. We have accordingly been working together with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and neighbouring countries to expand activities aimed at reducing the supply of illicit drugs and eventually eliminating opium cultivation altogether. In June 1992 Myanmar took the initiative by signing agreements with the People's Republic of China and the UNDCP and also with Thailand and the UNDCP regarding crop substitution, demand reduction and law enforcement. UNDCP experts are already in the country working to achieve these goals. Myanmar and Laos have also agreed to cooperate in this regard. The Governments of Myanmar, Laos, Thailand and China, aware that the problems of illicit drug production, trafficking and abuse can be addressed only through concerted international efforts, will sign a memorandum of understanding with the UNDCP during the course of the high-level plenary meetings of the General Assembly on drug control to be held in New York from 26 to 27 October.

Last April, Myanmar signed a drug agreement with India, and a similar agreement will be worked out with our remaining neighbour, Bangladesh. We are confident that this comprehensive and coordinated effort at the subregional level will produce the desired results. In the past year the strategy of combining prevention, education, treatment and rehabilitation of addicts, law enforcement and border area development has borne fruit. Significant amounts of illicit drugs and drug paraphernalia have been seized and destroyed. United Nations personnel and other visitors have been given the opportunity to visit the regions where opium is grown.

In August, United States Congressman Charles B. Rangel, Chairman of the House Narcotics Abuse and Control Committee, and Congressman Bill Richardson visited eastern Shan State to acquire first-hand knowledge of the illicit drug problem. During the visit they witnessed the destruction of large amounts of opium, heroin, opium oil, liquid opium and other drugs seized by the Myanmar authorities. Myanmar will continue to give top priority to overcoming the threat posed by illicit drugs, and it is our hope that more and more countries will join hands with us in this noble endeavour.

Myanmar today is on the threshold of a new era. The political, economic, social and administrative reforms currently being implemented herald a united, stable, peaceful and prosperous country. The new society will guarantee the unity of the national races and ensure the perpetuation of our national independence and sovereignty. It will be in harmony with its environment, its historical experiences, and the political, economic and social conditions of the nation. It will reflect the diverse culture and traditions of the national races in the union.

The new Myanmar nation that is envisaged by the National Convention will be a genuine multi-party democratic state. It will be a nation based on the universal values of justice, liberty and equality. There will be social justice, economic justice and political justice. There will be a complete separation of powers of state, and the judiciary will enjoy total independence. Freedom of thought, freedom of expression, freedom of belief, freedom of worship, freedom to seek a livelihood and freedom of organization will be guaranteed. There will also be equality of status, equality of opportunity and equality before the law.

These conditions will not materialize of their own accord. The right atmosphere must be created. To this end, my Government is doing its utmost to vindicate the trust placed in it by the people. As the democratic society envisaged is for the people of Myanmar, it must reflect the objective conditions of the country and be established in the manner and at the pace best suited to it.

Allow me to conclude by saying that the *Tatmadaw* have never failed the people in their hour of need and will not do so at this historic moment when a new nation is being created.

Mr. TAITT (Barbados): Permit me, Sir, on behalf of the Government and people of Barbados, to express our profound appreciation of the high honour which the international community has done to our region by your unanimous election to the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. As I join all those who have offered you congratulations from this rostrum, I feel bound to note with pride the considerable diplomatic skill, experience and commitment which you bring to the Chair and which allow my delegation the confidence to anticipate a most successful and satisfactory session.

May I also commend your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for having safely guided us through the demanding deliberations of the forty-seventh session.

We particularly thank the Secretary-General for his valiant efforts to secure international peace and security.

Barbados welcomes Andorra, Eritrea, the Czech Republic, Monaco, Macedonia and Slovakia to membership

of this great Organization, which we are sure will benefit from their participation.

It augurs well for the outcome of this session of the General Assembly that it has started against a backdrop of some success - however tenuous - in Haiti, in South Africa and in the Middle East. The cases of the Middle East and South Africa, especially, represent triumphs of diplomacy and patient negotiation. In this regard, no praise is too high for Norway's outstanding contribution in guiding seemingly intractable enemies along the difficult and daring path towards peace. As we in Barbados laud such a remarkable achievement, we hope fervently that it will lead soon to the long-sought goals of an Israel within secure boundaries and a homeland for the Palestinian people, goals envisaged in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). We dare to hope, too, that that reality, once achieved, will lead to a lasting peace in the region.

In South Africa, despite the carefully orchestrated campaign of violence and terrorism aimed at subverting every effort to create a non-racial, democratic South Africa, President de Klerk African National Congress President, Nelson Mandela have, with truly remarkable courage and foresight, brought their country to the point where the transition to democracy has now been enshrined in the laws of South Africa. Barbados rejoices that a date has been fixed for the holding of universal elections, and we welcome the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council to prepare for those elections.

In praising those two leaders, we must not overlook the significant contributions of the President of the Pan-Africanist Congress, Mr. Clarence Makwetu, and the many patriots on all sides, present and past, who have made and continue to make their various contributions, sometimes even to the extent of the supreme sacrifice. The encouraging progress in South Africa demands and deserves, no less than the process in the Middle East, the wholehearted support of the international community.

The issue of Haiti is a matter of extreme importance to the peace and security of the people of the Caribbean. You are well aware, Sir, that the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community were long convinced that the unfortunate and unacceptable state of affairs resulting from the overthrow of the elected President of Haiti could be resolved only through the intervention of the Security Council, the valiant efforts of the Organization of American States notwithstanding.

The fact that the Governors Island Agreement was signed so soon after the adoption of Security Council resolution 841 (1993) would seem to justify our consistent position. Today we continue to be apprehensive over the level and nature of the widespread turmoil in Port-au-Prince, turmoil which seems designed to delay, if not derail, the return of President Aristide to his rightful place. The international community in general, and the Security Council in particular, must not sit idly by, merely expressing regret at the sorry state of affairs in that unhappy country. The Security Council - indeed, all of our countries - must be prepared to take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the murders and assassinations cease. All parties must be made to honour the Governors Island Agreement and the results of the 1991 elections.

There is another issue which the people of the Caribbean have contemplated with more or less trepidation during the past 34 years. And although none of them might have an immediate solution to offer, many believe that nothing would bring more joy to the people of the region than the announcement of an impending rapprochement between the Republic of Cuba and our great neighbour to the north. In the light of recent international events, Barbados refuses to believe that only between these two countries can no path to a peaceful resolution of their conflict be found.

Four years ago in Barbados we celebrated the 350th anniversary of parliamentary practice. And it is in that context that we applaud the United Nations for its role in the conduct of successful elections in Angola and Cambodia. While we are pleased at the post-election progress being made in Cambodia, we are concerned about the deterioration in Angola. We urge the international community to be more vigilant in monitoring events in Angola. The comity of nations has a duty to ensure that the results of free and fair elections are accepted and respected by all parties - in Haiti, in Angola, in Cambodia or wherever else there is involvement by the United Nations in any such process. No party anywhere should ever be allowed even to think that the international community would tolerate the frustration of properly conducted election exercises.

Barbados remains convinced that the international community must adopt an integrated approach to peace, an approach which concentrates on building and preserving peace rather than on mere peace-keeping. Barbados therefore appreciates the attention currently being paid by this Organization to international security and peace-keeping. Indeed, we welcome the recent adoption of General Assembly resolution 47/120, endorsing the

Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace". We recognize that, in the search for consensus, the interests of all parties have not been fully addressed, but we consider that the reforms recommended represent a useful first step towards the enhanced role the United Nations is called upon to play in the promotion of international peace and security.

International peace and security can hardly be attained if the global environment continues to be sullied by rampant human rights abuses. Barbados welcomes the advances contained in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights, particularly the re-emphasis of the universality of human rights and the right to development as a human right. However, we must here reiterate that the widespread resurgence of racism, xenophobia, religious intolerance, ethnic conflicts and various other forms of human rights abuses pose a most serious threat to the peace and security of all of us.

The proposal to create a post of high commissioner for human rights was such a contentious issue at the World Conference for Human Rights that it has been referred to this session for action. Barbados considers that before such a post is established the following considerations should be taken into account. First, the mandate of the high commissioner should be satisfactorily defined. Secondly, there should be adequate safeguards to ensure the commissioner's independence and neutrality. Thirdly, the office of the high commissioner should not be manipulated to achieve the political ends of any State. Fourthly, the high commissioner should be empowered to investigate alleged human rights abuses across all borders, and not on a selective basis.

Barbados believes that preventive measures taken to guarantee international peace and security must also include efforts to safeguard basic social and economic rights. However, we are equally convinced that not enough is being done to address development problems. We concur in the Secretary-General's view that respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy cannot survive outside a framework of adequate development. Where access to food, clothing, shelter, education, health and the opportunity for gainful employment is denied, democracy cannot flourish.

In spite of 50 years of unprecedented technological progress, in many parts of the world abject poverty still persists. An estimated 1.1 billion persons, or one-fifth of humankind, are unable to afford even minimally acceptable levels of food and shelter. This problem, though concentrated largely within the developing world, has transcended national boundaries and now affects persons in the developing and developed countries alike. Low commodity prices, lack of investment capital, the inability to secure access to world markets, and high unemployment and low productivity have contributed to the marginalization of millions of unfortunate persons.

Particularly hard hit are our young people, among whom disillusionment and despair have already begun to take their toll, driving a growing number of them to resort to various forms of anti-social behaviour, including drug trafficking and drug abuse. This desperate situation will not disappear because of speeches denouncing poverty, or the adoption of resolutions calling for its elimination. Rather, we must urgently adopt radical measures designed to attack and eliminate the conditions which fuel the growing and unacceptable levels of poverty in our societies.

Barbados considers that social development will be among the greatest challenges facing the United Nations in the twenty-first century. We therefore regard the convocation of the World Summit on Social Development, scheduled for Copenhagen in 1995, as a clear signal that social development has become a priority issue on the world agenda. Barbados believes that that Summit will provide the international community with an opportunity to direct attention to the acute problems relating to development. Our conviction is that the focus of the development debate must be shifted to human development and that bold initiatives must be taken to combat poverty and to lighten the burden which structural adjustment places on the most vulnerable in our societies - our women and our children.

Barbados is heartened by the Secretary-General's "agenda for development" proposal and looks forward with interest to reviewing the report requested in General Assembly resolution 47/181. We also welcome the timely initiative taken by the Government of Papua New Guinea, an initiative in which I understand you yourself, Mr. President, have no small interest. My delegation hopes that this matter will be given the serious and urgent consideration it merits.

Among the deterrents to development, drug trafficking remains one source of grave concern to the Governments of the Caribbean. Apart from the tragic consequences that drug addiction has for the health of our people, illegal drugs constitute the single most pervasive ingredient of increased crime in our societies. In Barbados, for example, the majority of criminal cases brought before the courts involve directly or indirectly some linkage to drugs. Penal and health systems are being stretched to their limits, while

the financial implications of enforcement and rehabilitation are staggering. Not even developed countries have yet been able to eradicate from their societies drug abuse and its mirror-image, drug trafficking. Developing countries are still further disadvantaged by their chronic inability to take on the powerful drug cartels and the narco-terrorists with any hope of real success. The problem is transnational in scope.

It is therefore imperative that the Global Programme of Action adopted at the 1990 special session on drugs be implemented as soon as possible and that cooperation at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels be enhanced. The role of the United Nations Drug Control Programme is vital to this process. Barbados looks forward to the four high-level special plenary meetings scheduled to take place during this session. We expect that further measures to combat the universal scourge of drug abuse will emerge, along with the provision of the adequate funding necessary to achieve these ends.

It has been a year now since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was convened in Rio de Janeiro. Since that time, other matters - primarily matters of peace and security - have helped to push environment and development issues out of the limelight. The meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development, charged with the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of Agenda 21, served to remind us that sustainable development must continue to receive serious attention from the international community. The Commission succeeded in generating the necessary political will to impart a powerful impetus to national action for the implementation of Agenda 21. We can ill afford any loss in momentum.

This brings me to the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which the Government of Barbados has offered to host. The Conference will take place in Barbados from 25 April to 6 May 1994. The Government and people of Barbados are honoured that the international community has, in accepting our offer, placed its confidence in our capacity to host successfully a conference of this size and importance. The Conference will be the first of the follow-up activities of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) to be completed. It presents an early opportunity for the implementation of the commitments reached at the Rio Earth Summit. As such, the Conference also represents a test of the political will of the international community to match the solemn commitments of Agenda 21 with real action towards more sustainable development.

My colleague the Minister of the Environment, Housing and Lands of Barbados recently briefed the Preparatory Committee of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States on the progress of preparations for the Conference. My delegation will submit details on further progress when the item comes up for discussion in the substantive Committee. However, let me at this stage put on record my Government's appreciation of the spirit and atmosphere which prevailed in the Preparatory Committee. Unfortunately, the meeting of the Preparatory Committee fell victim to the emergency conference-servicing measures announced by the Secretary-General on 26 August 1993 and for that and other reasons the preparatory process did not go as far as it might have. Barbados shares the view, expressed by many delegations attending the meeting of the Preparatory Committee, that it would be dangerous to leave finalization of the preparatory process until April 1994 in Barbados. Given the number and complexity of the issues left outstanding from the Preparatory Committee, Barbados is convinced that some arrangements must be put in place to continue the preparatory process. We therefore look forward to working with interested delegations towards reaching agreement on an appropriate mechanism for continuing the preparatory process prior to the commencement of the Conference.

The Barbados Conference will provide the basis for the building of a partnership for the implementation of the decisions taken at Rio. The international community will be afforded the opportunity to signal its commitment to move forward towards more sustainable patterns of development in a pragmatic, realistic manner, based on practical, achievable goals. The people of Barbados look forward eagerly to welcoming representatives of each and every Member State in April 1994.

The threat of natural disasters to the sustained development of small developing countries must not be underestimated. Barbados applauds the efforts of all those associated with the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, to lessen the vulnerability of those communities most susceptible to such disasters. We consider it essential that response capabilities in this area be improved with all deliberate speed.

Barbados is collaborating closely with the Caribbean Disaster Preparedness Agency, the Caribbean Regional System, and with the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization to continue to improve its capacity to bounce back from the effects of a grade five-hurricane or to be able to come to the aid of any of our Caribbean neighbours who may fall victim to any

natural disasters. I am happy to be able to report that across our region we have succeeded to some degree, at great expenditure of effort and resources, in improving our capability to mitigate the effects of natural disasters.

Barbados supports wholeheartedly the current initiative of the United Nations to fashion a safer environment for all. The Organization is now called upon to expand its activities over wide areas of the globe. The new freedom of action reflects the current geopolitical reality. A new configuration of power is taking shape. While it is too early to determine the outcome we must seek to mould this new phenomenon into an instrument for the preservation of peace and security and for the alleviation of human suffering everywhere.

The Secretary-General has not missed an opportunity in recent times to highlight the dichotomy with which he is faced. He continues to point out that additional mandates are being heaped upon the Organization as a result of the new climate without a corresponding willingness to provide adequate resources for their execution. Barbados strongly supports the expressions of concern by the Secretary-General. We urge all Member States to do the best they can to correct this unsatisfactory situation. It is clear that there are some States whose capacity to pay may temporarily outstrip their actual ability to pay, but it is unconscionable for those who can pay not to do so. I trust, Mr. President, that under your expert guidance the General Assembly will finally be able to take appropriate measures to address the financial crisis threatening the very existence of the Organization.

Barbados accepts that the Security Council must always be allowed to function without unnecessary hindrance. We recognize equally clearly the principle of accountability. The Council has served its purpose well in the past, but changing times and circumstances dictate the need for an enhanced participation.

Twenty-seven years ago as a member of my country's first delegation, I sat in this Hall and listened to the then Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Errol Barrow, deliver his inaugural address to the Assembly at its twenty-first session.

In the intervening years though much has changed much has remained the same. Small countries like mine still belong to the submerged two thirds of the world's population, and where we manage by our own painful efforts to raise our living standards we are faced with the prospect of graduation. To be faced with graduation on the one hand and structural adjustment on the other is to be caught between Scylla and Charybdis. Once again Barbados would urge with all the power at its command that the constant threat of graduation be lifted from the vulnerable economies of small, developing countries.

In looking back over those 27 years with their ups and downs, their triumphs and disappointments, through prosperity and adversity, graduation and structural adjustment, as Mr. Barrow was on that day, I too am reminded of John Bunyan's Mr. Valiant For Truth when he said:

> "Tho with great difficulty I am got hither,
> Yet now I do not repent me of all the trouble I have been at to arrive where I am."

Mr. GATTI (San Marino) *(spoke in Italian: English text furnished by the delegation)*: More than 12 months ago, addressing the Assembly, which since then has seen a steady increase in its membership, with the admission of new Members that I welcome today with great pleasure, I expressed my personal satisfaction and that of the people of the Republic of San Marino over the momentous changes that have marked these past hectic years.

Today, however, we face the pressing and serious problem of managing those changes. It is of fundamental importance to those peoples who have seen the laying of the foundations of the edifice called "Democracy" that this process continue and be shored up by solid institutions. The strengthening of those institutions must be accomplished to guarantee the solidity of that essential edifice, which may be altered or changed in some of its parts, but which cannot be deprived of its foundations.

Today more than ever, the importance of democratic institutions must be acknowledged, upheld and stressed. Now more than ever, peoples need to be assured that struggles for power, those between factions and those caused by ethnic, economic and political interests, will be averted for ever so that real peace may be made, restored and maintained.

My country is convinced that a renewed commitment of the United Nations is necessary for the attainment of this aim, in virtue of the role it plays as a universal factor that has become a real point of reference for the entire world.

Not even the most advanced democratic society can fully meet the needs arising out of the exercise of freedom. In my opinion, however, any form of political regime other

than democracy would deprive man of his freedom to an even greater degree. Democracy, even in its initial and most incomplete forms, is organized in such a way that individuals may take part, directly or indirectly, in the exercise of power.

Further development of the existing democratic régime is a precise commitment that my country has undertaken in an attempt to find a solution to one of the consequences of the past emigration of its citizens. I am referring to the efforts we are making to facilitate the exercise of their right and duty to participate in political life through their votes. In our attempts to solve this problem the relevant international instruments of the United Nations will be a precise point of reference and an irreplaceable guide.

I am following with particular interest the discussion under way on the possibility of reforming the institutional mechanisms of the Organization. It is undoubtedly wise to adapt institutions to present circumstances, so that they will respond effectively to the new challenges. San Marino supports those reforms, prompted by the conviction that wider participation leads to more effective and shared interventions. That is why with my country is following with special attention the application submitted by Sweden, in its capacity as Chairman-in-Office of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), for the CSCE's admission to the United Nations with Observer States. That application enjoys the full support of all participating States, and I wish to express here the desire of my country to see it accepted.

The CSCE continues to play a leading role in Europe in favour of peace and the safeguarding of human rights. Closer cooperation with the United Nations has now become indispensable, and it will surely produce positive results.

The initial task of the United Nations was to lay down the fundamental principles for the protection of human dignity and for a peaceful, democratic and civil coexistence. It then undertook a wider-ranging task, in light of the evolution of rights and of those systems established for their safeguard. Now the Organization must intensify its intervention straightforwardly and incisively in order to resolve critical situations.

The policy of pursuing the peaceful solution, resorting to negotiations, mediation and political diplomatic initiatives, is unquestionably the right course. That is the path to follow in our times; it is policy of a democratic society in which reason must always prevail.

Recourse to force, even when it seems indispensable to maintain or restore democracy, is always an unfair and dangerous option, since it takes a heavy toll of lives and creates grounds for revenge that are risky and difficult to dispel and may always trigger civil wars.

I truly hope we will not have to say one day that the magic moment when our dreams seemed to have become reality has passed us by. We must persist in averting the dangerous strategy of nuclear deterrence.

If we manage to create a world with collective security as its prevailing feature, there will no longer be grounds for conflicts. Peace, however, does not depend exclusively on the possession of weapons and on the thirst for supremacy. Today, more than ever, peace depends on solidarity, on respect for rights and on our efforts in favour of tolerance.

Europe is plagued by conflicts that offend peoples, minorities, women, children and the poor. Every continent is afflicted by wars and deep crises, which have become so endemic as to arouse the suspicion that they have been accepted as the norm. Some of the conflicts have become so acute that even humane acts, solidarity and the most indispensable interventions against hunger and cold seem now to have faded into the background.

Exhausting and sincere mediation initiatives fail; crisis-management becomes impossible; the solution of conflicts seems unattainable, despite the growing number of political, diplomatic and military missions, and even relief missions are hindered in the performance of their work.

San Marino believes that the United Nations has the ability, the authority and the structures to formulate a dynamic and effective plan able to prevent and solve conflicts, manage crises and maintain peace.

The authority and the means of the Organization may sometimes not involve military choices. In any case, such interventions can be justified only when all possibilities of a peaceful solution have been considered and it is borne in mind that resort to this option must not cause victims.

Crises and conflicts may be averted by eliminating their root causes. When riches are not fairly distributed; when all citizens do not enjoy the same rights and duties; when rights and freedoms are not respected; when it is forgotten that minorities are composed of individuals; when a distinction is made between the dignity of man and that of woman; when injustice exists; when man and his

rights do not prevail over the organization of the State and its military apparatus; then conflicts inevitably arise.

The key principle of the United Nations, which has always fascinated the people of the Republic of San Marino and has now become our trusted point of reference, is that of the indissoluble bond between personal freedom and the liberty of all peoples. That freedom must be based on a complex system of limits so that no man, in the exercise of his rights, can ride roughshod over the rights of another.

In that spirit the Republic of San Marino recently welcomed with sincere satisfaction the agreement of mutual recognition signed by the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). That agreement, concerning an area that has been theatre of war for a very long time, was reached through peaceful negotiations and political mediation in which both sides gave up something to facilitate the peace process.

This major event is an important point of reference, a proof of the existing good will and wish for certainty, confirming that this is the only possible way to resolve conflicts.

My country is convinced that many challenges have yet to be met and still await effective solutions. We have to exert our best endeavours to defend the poor from underdevelopment, to sustain and contribute to their progress by restoring to them, when the situation so requires, the environment of which they have been deprived as a consequence of ecological degradation. Every man is a guardian of the world and is entitled to ask that it be used correctly.

We must express solidarity in the forms that such a humanitarian and understanding attitude requires, respecting the dignity of peoples and their freedom to make their own choices and determine their own destinies. We must play a fundamental role in educating future generations on mutual understanding, respect and tolerance. This is the challenge facing the entire world and Europe in particular. Together we will have to overcome the consequences of intolerance to which we have given the names of racism, "ethnic cleansing", mass migrations, refuge and asylum.

The people of San Marino are following with particular concern all issues related to minorities, their inalienable right to free existence and well-balanced development, respect for their cultures and religions, and the real exercise of these rights under the same conditions enjoyed by the majorities. The reason for this special interest is probably to be found in the numerically small population of my country, which history has always taught to offer hospitality and express solidarity with the weak, the oppressed and the victims of persecution.

Today this problem has reached proportions that might become alarming. Nobody knows how many people may be forced in the future to leave their native countries in order to survive, whether in flight from underdevelopment and hunger or prompted by the desire for freedom. Thus, the problem has two faces. The first is the fact that no one should be forced to leave his home and country; the second is the fact that all people, to the extent their circumstances permit, must be willing to offer hospitality in a spirit of solidarity and brotherhood.

Having referred to this problem, I cannot fail to mention the situation affecting the former Yugoslavia, the coast of which can be seen, when the air is clear, from the mountain on which the Republic of San Marino is situated. Who knows the destiny of that poor people or when this unacceptable war will finally end? I appeal to the General Assembly, to all States of the world and to the United Nations that we put a halt to the catastrophe. Let us reiterate and strengthen within our own nations a sense of tolerance undertaken as a duty and not as a right.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.

United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

27thth PLENARY MEETING

Tuesday, 12 October 1993
at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

President: INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. CARDOSO (Guinea-Bissau) (*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation*): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to offer you my warmest congratulations on your well-deserved election to the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Your presence at the head of this Assembly clearly attests to the commitment of your country - Guyana - to the defence of peace and the promotion of multilateral diplomacy. Your skills and your experience on the international scene, acquired over many years, will, we are certain, ensure the successful conclusion of our deliberations. My country, Guinea-Bissau, wishes to assure you of our fullest readiness to cooperate with you.

Our congratulations and thanks go to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for the remarkable and constructive job he did in steering the work of the forty-seventh session. We wish also to express our gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for the way in which he is directing the work of the Organization in this new context.

We hail the advent of new Members to the great family of the United Nations: Andorra, Monaco, Eritrea, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

I am particularly honoured to have the privilege of speaking on behalf of my country, Guinea-Bissau, at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly at a time when an increased worldwide consensus seems to be emerging, in that significant and encouraging changes are taking place in the global political and economic landscape.

How many questions, expectations and, indeed, how much skepticism underlie that assertion?

The end of the bipolar domination of international relations and the cessation of the cold war, which affected all continents, constitute an event that is of manifest political significance and of great historical impact - first, because it has led to the dismantling of an international order that prevailed for half a century and divided the world into hostile blocs; secondly, because it has cleared a space for the development of certain processes whose free evolution was impeded because of the political discipline imposed, within each bloc, by the demands of the conflicts between the two super-Powers.

The world power pattern has changed. This has led to a shift in certain countries' relative positions in the economic and political hierarchy. The very nature of the relations between these countries is changing. However, the rules and practices that will constitute the basis of the new international order have not yet been defined.

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As happens in periods of history marked by great changes - especially unpredictable changes - we are now witnessing the emergence of factors that give rise to both integration and disintegration, to the order and disorder that are alternating in international behaviour and in the conduct of international affairs. The new and old orders are fighting for primacy in the development of an international system, and it is no longer easy to distinguish between the past and the future.

The new international context gives rise to considerable anxiety, especially as it poses several questions that have not yet been answered. For example, it is not clear how political hegemony can be exercised in a system that has become multipolar; strong tendencies towards globalization and towards regionalization are emerging on the international scene, and one wonders how these can be reconciled; the nation State's decision-making capacity is limited by transnational players, and its prerogatives of sovereignty are being ceded in order that it may be incorporated into broader political and economic entities, even as ancient ethnic groups are claiming the right to be regarded as nation States; one sees increasing capitalist competition in a situation in which economic interdependence imposes new parameters for the settlement of conflicts of interest; one is witnessing a world-wide heightening of awareness of the responsibility of us all with regard to ecological matters, and, at the same time, one has to deal with the means of sharing responsibility between the various countries.

This is hardly an exhaustive list, but it is sufficient to demonstrate the extent to which the international agenda is being broadened and made more complicated. The future of many countries will depend on the items on that agenda and on our capacity to organize our approach to them.

Given this situation, it is absolutely vital that the closest possible contact between nations be maintained by means of the exchange of information, joint thinking and discussion, so that awareness of the changes that are under way and of their possible impact on a continent such as Africa may be deepened.

At the beginning of my statement, I mentioned the emergence of a universal consensus that has stemmed form the changes in the international system. The wide prospects that have opened up, in terms of the peaceful settlement of conflicts and the elimination of tension in regions such as southern Africa, western Africa, the Maghreb, Central Europe, Eastern Europe and Asia, lead us to believe that this process, which is marked by the strong resolve of the international community to achieve lasting peace, will not turn out to be a short-term symptom of a world in upheaval.

The situation prevailing in Angola is still a matter of major concern to Guinea-Bissau. My Government welcomes the unanimous adoption, by the Security Council of the United Nations, of resolution 864 (1993), which is a logical follow-up to earlier resolutions that aim at the restoration of peace to Angola. We are convinced that only dialogue can lead to a lasting solution that will result in the return of peace to that country. The parties to the conflict should comply in full with the obligations resulting from the agreements that have been signed and from the Security Council resolutions. This is the only possible way to end the suffering of the Angolan people and to respond to their legitimate desire for peace and democracy.

With regard to Mozambique, we should like to express our concern at the slowness with which the Peace Agreement is being implemented. We encourage the parties concerned to continue their efforts to strengthen peace and national unity. Further, we exhort the international community to continue its support for that process.

In South Africa, the abolition of the legislative pillars of apartheid is a positive step. It is now important that the last obstacles, including those caused by the climate of violence, be removed to make possible negotiations towards the creation of a non-racial and democratic South Africa. We have welcomed with satisfaction President Nelson Mandela's appeal concerning the lifting of sanctions against South Africa.

The tragedy that, daily, besets the Somali people gives us reason for great anxiety. We urge all the parties concerned to end the hostilities and to commit themselves to negotiation. We are convinced that the peace-keeping activities in Somalia, within the framework of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNISOM II), should, above all, serve the interests of the Somali people and strengthen the fragile process of national reconciliation that is under way.

We happily welcome the positive developments in Liberia - in particular, the signing, at Cotonou, of the Peace Agreement, including the provision for the establishment of a central transitional Government. However, we regret the widespread adverse effects the Liberian war has had on the territory of neighbouring countries. We express the hope that all the protagonists on

the Liberian political scene will persevere in the consolidation of peace by making every effort towards reconstruction of their country.

In the Maghreb, the constructive position taken by the Kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front makes it possible to be optimistic about developments in the situation in Western Sahara and about the prospects for organizing a referendum under United Nations auspices.

Guinea-Bissau watches with concern the conflict that is laying waste the territory of the former Yugoslavia. We believe that only an agreement acceptable to all parties involved in the conflict will put an end to this bloody episode. My Government regrets that the latest Geneva talks on peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not yield the expected results. We hope that the parties will adopt more flexible positions with a view to bringing about the signing of a peace agreement.

Guinea-Bissau believes that the solution to this fratricidal conflict must be sought by peaceful means. That is why we continue to support the United Nations and the European Community's negotiating effort and welcome the Security Council's adoption of resolution 827 (1993) on the establishment of an International Tribunal.

In the case of East Timor, we urge the Secretary-General to continue his efforts with the parties concerned aimed at finding a peaceful, negotiated solution to this issue.

In the Middle East, peace is now possible thanks to the *rapprochement* between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. We greet the Washington agreement with satisfaction and renewed hope. We encourage the parties to continue negotiations with a view to establishing a lasting peace throughout the region.

The reunification of China is in essence the sole concern of the Chinese people. In our opinion, the international community should turn its attention to the need to recognize the fundamental rights of the 21 million inhabitants of the Republic of China.

The poverty and social injustice that are the sorry lot of a large portion of humankind are amongst the underlying causes of the conflicts that constantly threaten the world's peace and stability. The ideological tensions of the cold war seem likely to be replaced by new tensions, this time economic in origin, if adequate precautions are not taken. The United Nations must of course strengthen its structure for maintaining world peace and security, but it must also play a leading role in helping to build a stable economic system and promoting the development of the developing countries, particularly that of the least developed countries. This is without question the best and most effective form of preventive diplomacy.

The economic situation in Africa is becoming more and more worrying. Today, on the eve of the twenty-first century, incomes in sub-Saharan Africa average $490 per person per year, in other words, they are the lowest in the world. The average figure masks great disparities between countries: Africa is the only region in the world where the number of people living in poverty is likely to increase markedly before the year 2000. Trends in the world economy lead us to predict that the situation will get worse.

Black Africa's share of world trade has plummeted from 3.8 per cent in 1970 to 1 per cent now, which has entailed Africa's being relegated to the sidelines in international relations. Despite plentiful labour and investment opportunities, direct investment from the most industrialized countries is in flight from the least developed countries towards the advanced economies. Sub-Saharan Africa receives about 6 per cent of direct investment, which is profitable essentially for those few countries with oil and/or strategically important minerals.

Restrictions on international trade as a result of various protectionist practices and of subsidy policies for the industrialized countries' agricultural products are imposing severe limitations on the underdeveloped countries' export opportunities. In this regard, can we hope that the Uruguay Round negotiations, if they succeed, will spare humankind the possible unpleasant aftermath of discriminatory practices on the part of the trading blocs?

We wish to make an appeal that the next round of negotiations be planned to have all the relevance that the situation requires. In the meanwhile, it is painful for us to see how those who recommend to us that we should liberalize trade if we want to get our economies moving again can, in the blink of an eye, become fervent defenders of protectionism when they are convinced that they are defending their own interests that way. Liberal policies in the countries of the South have not a hope of succeeding unless the countries of the North systematically dismantle their protectionist barriers and open up their markets.

The transition to effective and lasting market economies requires further buttressing from the

international community. Most of the underdeveloped countries, particularly in Africa, have recognized the errors that were committed in their post-colonial economic management. They have therefore embarked, with the assistance of the international financial organizations and other partners abroad, on radical economic reforms aimed at laying the foundations for economic growth and development. Enormous political and social costs have had to be borne in carrying out these reforms, but the will to succeed is still there despite all the odds against it.

Unfortunately, these efforts have been overwhelmed by the massive reductions in financial assistance from the industrialized countries and the multilateral organizations. The target set by the United Nations for official development assistance (ODA), 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP), has scarcely been complied with at all. At the moment, only an infinitesimal fraction of ODA is being allocated to the poorest countries and even less than that to the priority sectors that are most likely to trigger development. ODA must be restructured if the problem of poverty and lasting development is to be tackled. We must take the risk and have faith in a renewed Africa with a new economic management mind-set.

Judging by the number of international conferences and meetings on Africa that are held each year and the feeble way they make available finance to root out the evils they deplore so much, we could be right in saying that we live in a real consumer society for intellectual products, that is. People are at last beginning to wake up to the fact that these international meetings, although they sometimes do succeed in making world public opinion aware of one or another aspect of underdevelopment, have not contributed very much at all towards eliminating the great scourge of underdevelopment itself.

Not only does the way economic and financial opportunities are being distributed throughout the world provide the less developed countries with piffling amounts of resources, even worse than that is the way colossal amounts are being clawed back from them, particularly through those notorious debt-servicing costs. Total debt as a percentage of GNP stands at over 100 per cent, and debt-servicing costs are over 20 per cent and even 50 per cent in some cases. As a result, several African countries are unable to maintain the infrastructures for production or the social services that are vital to development.

Traditional approaches to solving the debt problem, while they have granted some countries a few months' breathing space, would none the less appear to have exacerbated the problem, since Africa's debt burden has gone on growing, by about 10 per cent over the last decade. This is extremely worrying.

How can we allot more financial resources to developing our human resources, involving women in development and protecting the environment if at the same time the donors are mounting pressures to have the debt paid back, operate unfavourable trade policies and cut back their assistance? My country believes that major steps absolutely must be taken if we want the low-income countries not to miss the boat for economic modernization and development. The Trinidad conclusions, which propose canceling two thirds of the eligible debt coupled with a rescheduling of the remainder over 25 years and an additional five-year grace period, offer a promising and encouraging approach to easing the debt burden. However, the Trinidad conclusions should also be applied to multilateral debt, which now accounts for one third of debt servicing costs.

If our planet is to have lasting security, there must be a collective effort to combat the endogenous and exogenous factors that nowadays condemn the majority of the world's population to absolute poverty. If this poverty persists, its consequences will ultimately spill over borders in the form of migration, terrorism, drugs and crime of all kinds.

Africa's economy is worsening to such an extent that we must break with routine thinking and devise new instruments and methods in order to understand and properly respond to the needs of a continent which is economically in anguish. Unfortunately, it is clear that technological advances, which should contribute to improving the human lot everywhere, are actually creating an increasingly greater gulf between those who have mastered that technology and those who are trying to enter into the technological age. The development of science and technology ill-suited to our needs is contributing to a reduction in the demand for commodities and is consequently further worsening the terms of trade.

Given all these issues, does this Organization not have a role to play in mitigating the negative effects on the least-developed countries of the rapid globalization of production and sophisticated technological systems? This is the very foundation of the preventive diplomacy that the United Nations has advocated.

The prospects for development are also threatened by the staggering pace of the degradation of the environment. The degradation of natural resources and ecosystems poses a major threat to humankind.

For Africa, which still depends on natural resources for its survival, this situation involves grave consequences likely to hamper medium-term economic recovery programmes if urgent measures are not taken and the appropriate means mobilized. With national budgets already truncated, African countries will find it very difficult to face these challenges unaided in the absence of an increase in international assistance, properly programmed and managed so as to ensure the rational development and regulation of the environment.

The economic difficulties faced by most of the countries of the South have markedly diminished their ability to act together and in a coordinated manner. Domestic economic challenges, instead of promoting the mobilization of forces and resources in a regional or subregional context, often lead to a tendency by these countries to turn inward. This tendency has been compounded by structural adjustment programmes designed and executed in a strictly national context, with the aim of upgrading short-term indicators of macroeconomic and financial performance. The chances for sustainable development in the developing countries and particularly in the least-developed countries could be increased by strengthened programmes of regional and subregional integration and cooperation.

In this respect, we welcome the efforts of the European Economic Community, in the framework of the Lomé IV Convention, to lay the foundation for closer economic cooperation between the five Portuguese-speaking countries of Africa, despite the fact that they are not geographically contiguous. In this context, strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation with Portugal and Brazil will make it possible to develop a special kind of relationship between these countries, all of which use the Portuguese language.

It has now been clearly acknowledged that the active participation of peoples in political, economic and social life is an essential prerequisite for releasing creative energy and enriching cultural values and people's ability to take control of its own destiny. Mindful of this fact, Guinea-Bissau, like other countries of our continent, has opted for democracy as one of the means to mobilize its full human and physical potential in the struggle against underdevelopment. In this respect, the appropriate legal and institutional machinery has been established, with a view to promoting a political system based on consensus and the rule of the majority and on a transparent and effective public administration.

The democratic process, to be credible, must mesh with the socio-cultural heritage of a region or a country. Virtually everywhere in Africa, we are witnessing the emergence of new forces for change which are in the vanguard of democracy: civilian societies, especially free-association and cooperative movements; non-governmental organizations; and civic associations.

Despite some short-term obstacles, political pluralism in Guinea-Bissau is, without the shadow of a doubt, an irreversible process. One of its stages will culminate in the holding of the first multi-party elections, scheduled for 27 March 1994. To ensure the greatest possible transparency in these elections, the Government is taking all the steps necessary to prepare for them, with the support of its foreign partners. In this context, international observers will be invited to assist in the organization of the elections, and we look forward to receiving increased support from the international community at the appropriate time.

Sustained support for these new forces of change is absolutely vital if we wish to bolster new democracies and explicitly affirm our commitment to the protection of human rights.

The challenges facing the United Nations in terms of maintaining international peace and stability while at the same time promoting economic and social development in a rapidly changing world require that profound changes be made in its structure. These changes should take into account the interests of all the components. More than ever, international cooperation has become an opportunity to create lasting peace, to strengthen protection for the dignity of human beings everywhere, and to safeguard the rights, profound aspirations and well-being of present and future generations.

For its part, Guinea-Bissau, faithful to the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and determined to make its contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security, solemnly reaffirms its firm commitment to pursue this course. We are convinced that the task of maintaining international peace and security is a responsibility incumbent on the whole of the international community, on all countries large and small, in conformity with the principle of the sovereign equality of States.

It is against this backdrop that my country has presented its candidacy as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, and we ask all Member States to support us.

Guinea-Bissau is admittedly a small country, but its firm resolve to contribute to the attainment of the objectives of this Organization is widely known. Our presence at this time - in the framework of United Nations Missions - in Angola, Mozambique, Liberia, Cambodia, Haiti and in the former Yugoslavia, in both the civilian and the military spheres, is a clear illustration of this assertion.

Mr. YOUNG (St. Vincent and the Grenadines): Mr. President, the delegation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes your election to preside over the work of the General Assembly at this its forty-eighth session. By your elevation to this exceedingly demanding position, the General Assembly has acknowledged your well-known personal merits, proven ability and professional skills. I am confident that you will guide this session to a successful conclusion of the business before us.

Your country, Guyana, shares a number of common interests and affinities with St. Vincent and the Grenadines and other sister States in the Latin American and Caribbean region. It is therefore with a deep sense of pride that we congratulate you on your unanimous election and pledge the full cooperation of the delegation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines throughout the difficult and challenging period ahead.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines was pleased to be in the Chair in August 1992 when the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) unanimously endorsed the Caribbean candidature for the Presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. It was the first time that the Group had so acted, and I wish to congratulate all those who were involved in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) effort, and to thank all member states of the GRULAC for their cooperation. We in CARICOM are steadfast in our commitments, and this demonstration of hemispheric solidarity augurs well for continued strengthening of our ties, not only in placing candidates in important positions in the international arena, but even more critically in promoting and securing the best interests of our member countries in the post-cold-war world.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, former Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, for the able and inspired manner in which he guided the work of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session .

I wish also to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the extraordinary role he is playing in shaping the future of the international system.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes the representatives of the States newly admitted to membership of the United Nations, namely, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Eritrea, the Principality of Monaco, and Andorra. We particularly wish to congratulate the people of Eritrea on winning the long battle for their self-determination, and we express the hope that their diligence in the pursuit of political independence will be combined with an appropriate strategy for economic achievement.

The admission of a nation to this body always marks a significant event in the international arena as it takes us another step forward towards the objective of universal representation.

Adherence to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the right of the world's peoples to self-determination are the main barometers used in the admission of States to membership of this body of nations. However, the Republic of China on Taiwan, a nation of over 21 million inhabitants, which today has one of the most vigorous economies in the world, is excluded from membership of the United Nations. In this post-cold-war era, when a number of countries which once had a single identity and representation in this Organization now find ready admission as separate and sovereign members, it is appropriate that all States capable of maintaining such sovereign identity be so recognized. Moreover, the Republic of China on Taiwan has demonstrated its capacity to be in the forefront of world economic development and should be provided with an opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, the programmes of the United Nations.

My delegation heralds the signing of the United Nations- brokered Governors Island Accord last July by President Aristide and the military-backed Government of Haiti, headed by General Raoul Cedras, as an historic opportunity for the Haitian people, the hemisphere, and the principle of democratic rule. The interim period until President Aristide's return to Haiti on the 30th of this month must be a time for healing and laying the groundwork for a smooth take-over, and for a concerted rehabilitation process aimed at bringing some measure of

economic and political stability to that long-suffering country.

My delegation takes this opportunity to reiterate our solidarity with the Haitian people, who have struggled over the past months amidst persistent and blatant human rights abuses and political repression. We hail the efforts and initiatives taken by the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and the Government of the United States of America in bringing the usurpation of authority to an end. Let us pray that the clear message from the resolution of the Haitian crisis by international response will halt the ambitions of the various military aspirants there.

As the United Nations moves to perform its peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-enforcing roles in many troubled areas around the world, harassment, beatings and murder of its personnel, both civilian and military, are on the rise. Earlier in the year a number of United Nations personnel in the Middle East and Cambodia were slain. These killings followed the murder of a nurse working with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in Gaza and of a United Nations driver in Afghanistan. This year the world has also been shocked by the deaths of a number of Pakistanis, Italians, Moroccans, Americans and nationals of other countries serving in the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM).

My Government takes this opportunity to express its condolences to the Governments and peoples of those countries whose nationals paid the ultimate price in their desire to bring peace and deliver humanitarian assistance to the suffering peoples of the world. We also wish to express our sympathy to the bereaved families of all those United Nations personnel who died in the line of duty. Member States must be reminded of their responsibility to protect United Nations workers and of their obligation to act promptly and effectively to deter, prosecute and punish all those responsible for violence.

We salute the courage and commitment of those dedicated people who continue to accept considerable personal risks in order to carry out United Nations missions. The international community must take appropriate steps to protect its members and we eagerly await the submission of concrete proposals designed to enhance the safety and security of United Nations forces and personnel.

It is evident that the perceived disarray in the United Nations military operation in Somalia is fuelling instability in the country and detracting from the achievement of the original goals of restoring peace and security and ensuring the distribution of humanitarian relief, thereby paving the way for the re-establishment of civil society in the country at large. Naturally, these objectives cannot be achieved unless the international community continues to work in earnest to ensure that disarmament is achieved throughout the country in conformity with the provisions of the Addis Ababa agreement of March 1993, to which all factions are signatories.

In this regard, my delegation is of the view that appropriate measures must be taken against those who continue to impede disarmament, in direct contravention of Security Council resolutions and the Addis Ababa agreement. My delegation welcomes signs of a willingness to negotiate on the part of rebel forces.

From this point on all actions by the United Nations in Somalia should be aimed at winning the trust of the Somali people as a prerequisite to the re-establishment of peace and security, national reconciliation, restoration of the Somali State and the reconstruction and development of the country.

My delegation congratulates the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), under the leadership of Mr. Yasser Arafat, on concluding an agreement with the Rabin Government of Israel to end hostilities among their peoples. We see this as a significant first step that will fail unless it leads to the implementation of the resolutions long agreed to in the United Nations on the territories occupied by Israel and the acceptance by the United Nations of Palestine to membership. Just as my delegation has persistently endorsed the right of Israel to exist within secure borders, we assert the same right for Palestine. At the forty-fifth session of the Assembly, when we were discussing the invasion of Kuwait, my delegation called on this body to demonstrate consistency in responding to its resolutions, and we do so again.

We wish to congratulate the Government of Norway on the pivotal and historic facilitating role they played in the process of mediating in the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. We admire the dignified manner of their contribution and subsequent response.

The rapidly deteriorating situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina cries out for urgent resolution. The state of affairs cannot be tolerated much longer. Immeasurable harm in both human and material terms has already been

done, and the Serbs and Croats appear to be bent on the dismemberment of Bosnia and Herzegovina through border changes, by force and by ethnic cleansing. The international community cannot agree to a solution dictated by the Serbs and Croats at the expense of the Bosnian Muslims. We also cannot accept any territorial solution unless it has the agreement of the three parties. My delegation wishes to state unequivocally that the measures necessary to bring about a reversal of the Serbian aggression must include the immediate immobilization of heavy weapons, placing them under effective international control, and the effective enforcement of comprehensive sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia until all the conditions in the relevant Security Council resolutions are met. My delegation calls on all those with the resources to influence a return to normality in this part of the world to honour their moral responsibility.

The end of the cold war has resulted in a new spirit of cooperation between erstwhile enemies. Ongoing restructuring of the world body is designed to enhance the capacity of the Organization for preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peacemaking. Regrettably, these changes do not mean the end of bloody regional conflicts. The strife in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nagorny Karabakh and Liberia continues. In Angola, Sudan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan there is conflict and distress.

The demands on the United Nations for peace-keeping and peace-building are increasing daily in the number of operations and personnel as well as in the scope of their mandates. But in order to bring peace and security to these troubled areas the international community must redouble its efforts to bring about a resolution of their conflicts.

One of my country's most important priorities is support for the right of all peoples living under colonial or alien domination and/or foreign occupation to self-determination and independence. Stressing our commitment to the goal of the complete eradication of colonialism, we once again pledge to strengthen our solidarity with all those countries facing aggression or intervention or interference in their internal affairs.

Consistent with this position, we strongly condemn the continuous efforts of certain segments of South African society to perpetuate the system of apartheid. At the same time, we welcome the recent progress towards the establishment of a non-racial democracy, paving the way for the first non-racial elections, scheduled for April 1994, and the eventual reintegration of that country into the international political and economic community.

We welcome the adoption by acclamation on Friday, 8 October, of the General Assembly resolution in support of Mr. Nelson Mandela's call for the immediate lifting of sanctions against South Africa.

The delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is particularly pleased that four vital pieces of legislation, setting up, the Independent Electoral Commission, the Independent Media Commission, the Independent Broadcasting Authority and the Transitional Executive Council have been adopted by both the Negotiating Council and the South African Parliament, and are in the process of being enacted into law.

With the changing world environment the Organization has been catapulted into new prominence and there has been renewed hope, and high expectation, as well as new ideas on the functioning of the General Assembly. The same movement of change is also of vital importance in the Security Council and in the economic and social fields. Let us not lose the momentum in our quest to give new life to the Organization.

The General Assembly is a body that has been functioning below the capacity envisaged by its founding fathers. On the other hand, we have a Security Council that has expanded in scope and power without a corresponding increase in its membership or a reorganization of its functions. The need has also been established for strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council through a better distribution of its functions and a rationalization of its activities.

My delegation is of the view that at a minimum the Security Council should be expanded to allocate permanent seats to Japan and Germany and up to six new rotating seats to be filled on a regional basis in order better to reflect the increased membership of the United Nations and the changed international situation. Certainly, we do not grant to Japan and Germany the recognition they richly deserve.

The Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit was about nations joining together in common resolve to do a better job in the future and to offer our children the hope for a brighter tomorrow. The centrepiece of this international effort, Agenda 21, is a blueprint for our planet which the Governments of the world adopted by acclamation. With the creation of a Commission on Sustainable Development

and the restructuring of the economic and social functions of the United Nations, we now have the institutional arrangements in place to ensure that the measures prescribed by Agenda 21 are adequately addressed.

In the interim between Rio and the convening of the first substantial session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, it appeared to many that the spirit of Rio was beginning to fade away, due in part to the failure of the industrialized countries to make firm financial commitments to the programme approved at UNCED. There is, however, renewed hope because, since the June session of the Commission, machinery has been firmly put in place to follow up on pledges made at the Rio Summit.

The establishment by the Commission of two working groups to tackle the thorny issues of financial flows and technology transfer to the developing countries of the South, in addition to reviewing mechanisms for innovative financing of Agenda 21 and for analysing conditions that determine the flow of financial and economic resources, such as debt relief, terms of trade and commodity prices, is a positive approach, and it should give new impetus to the implementation of the global plan which the Rio Summit adopted to protect the world from environmental degradation through the twenty-first century. We wish to thank those who have contributed to the Global Environment Facility, which makes grant funding available to poor countries so that they may properly shoulder their share of environmental responsibilities in our global community.

As we observe new trends in the world economy, it is noteworthy that there is potentially greater capacity for growth of real consumption in developing countries than in the developed ones. Those of us who live in small island States have limited options in response to the international economic environment. The banana industry, which is the lifeline of our economies in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the other countries of the Windward Islands, is currently under threat of extinction. My delegation wishes to record, at this session of the General Assembly, our gratitude to the European Economic Community for its support for this vital component of our economies.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a small developing archipelagic State, with all the generic circumstances associated with small size, limited resources, geographical dispersion and relative isolation from markets. Naturally we also have advantages, which we continue to exploit in the national interest. Development in all its forms is of paramount national importance to us. In this regard, we look forward with enthusiasm to the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, and the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which is scheduled to convene in Barbados in 1994. It is our fervent hope that the international community will recognize the special characteristics and developmental needs of this category of countries, which have not changed in the new configuration of world politics. We pray also that there will be tangible benefits following the conclusion of these Conferences.

The United Nations has designated 1993 the International Year for the World's Indigenous People. Forced off their ancestral lands by settlers and colonizers, indigenous peoples in many parts of the world have faced untold discrimination and poverty and are often afforded little say in their political future. It is no surprise, therefore, that they are increasingly seeking to exercise their full range of human rights. The world's communities are urged to treat minorities and indigenous peoples, and persons belonging to them, on the basis of equality, and to take measures that would, *inter alia*, facilitate their full participation in all aspects of the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of the society.

My delegation is proud to state that in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines the indigenous people, the Caribs, are fully integrated into Vincentian society and are beneficiaries of all rights and freedoms under our Constitution. They participate fully in the political process, and today an active representative in the House of Assembly is a descendant of Joseph Chatoyer, the Paramount Chief of the Caribs and a national hero of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Our Government has also taken specific steps, through its land reform and distribution policy, to empower the Caribs, who are the main beneficiaries of the Government's acquisition of the area formerly occupied by Orange Hill Estates, and the subsequent distribution, with title, of economically viable plots to them.

My Government will ensure that our indigenous people continue to participate fully in national society and that their views are solicited and taken into consideration in decision-making processes that affect them and the nation as a whole.

My delegation is proud to co-sponsor a draft resolution of the Standing Committee of Caribbean

Ministers Responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean Community calling for the annual observance of an International Day of Indigenous Peoples. I hope that this draft resolution, when brought before this body, will be adopted by acclamation and will receive unanimous follow-up support from Member countries.

The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes and values highly the deepening of relations between the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Latin America in general. We are also encouraged by the degree of cooperation which is being developed between CARICOM and Central America. In the increasingly competitive world environment, which is gradually being dominated by large trading blocs, it is imperative for our countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to forge closer ties through economic and other forms of functional cooperation.

My Government totally condemns the illicit production, trafficking in and consumption of drugs. These harbingers of violent crime and corruption pose a serious threat to the health and well-being of our economies and our people, endanger our democratic institutions and jeopardize national and regional security.

We are firmly convinced that only integrated regional and international efforts can effectively address the drug problem, and, accordingly, we stress the need for increased local, regional and international cooperation. Greater emphasis should be placed on programmes that generate employment and income for persons attracted to drug production and trafficking as a means of livelihood. These should be pursued concurrently with programmes for the prevention of drug use and the rehabilitation of drug users. The appropriate measures must also be taken to strengthen our judicial institutions to ensure that the perpetrators of drug abuse and related crimes are brought to swift and effective justice.

We in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are closely observing the evolution of democracy in the States of Eastern Europe and the territories of the former Soviet Union, as well as its consolidation worldwide. We agonized with freedom-loving peoples when the Russian constitutional crisis threatened to "put democracy under a shade." We regret the loss of life that resulted from the struggle for control, and we hope that the emergence of a full- fledged system of democracy, with the ultimate power residing in the hands of the people, will not be impeded by any self-serving acts on the part of major players.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes the constitutional resolution of the political impasse in Pakistan. As a member of the Commonwealth, we welcome Mrs. Benazir Bhutto back as Prime Minister of her country and look forward to meeting her in Cyprus at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting.

My delegation wishes to reiterate its resolute commitment to the democratic ideal and the concomitant free enterprise system. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, like the other countries of CARICOM, has gone through a historic constitutional journey, from Crown Colony Government, with its limited franchise, to full political independence under universal adult suffrage. We have adhered to the principles and practice of participatory democracy and the market economy, even when these ideals were not as pervasive and mandatory as they are today. We have stayed the course, by choice and conviction, and our people have reaped the benefits. They will have it no other way.

In this post-cold-war era we are determined to maintain the gains of our democracy which we have accumulated over the years, even as we face the increasing difficulties associated with the marginalization of small States in the face of bloc consolidation and other emerging trends of our time.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I should like to draw the attention of the Assembly to document A/INF/48/6/Add.1, which contains a tentative programme of work and schedule of plenary meetings for the months of October, November and December. This addendum supersedes document A/INF/48/6.

I should like to point out that this schedule is being issued as early as possible in order to assist delegations in planning their work. For its part, the Secretariat will endeavour to ensure that the relevant documentation will be available to delegations ahead of the discussion of any given agenda item.

I should further point out that there are still a few agenda items for the consideration of which no dates have been indicated. I will announce the dates for the consideration of those agenda items in due course and sufficiently in advance. I will also keep the Assembly informed of any additions or changes.

The list of speakers for each of the agenda items listed in document A/INF/48/6/Add.1 is now open, and I draw members' attention to that.

As I mentioned last week, I hope to keep as closely as possible to the schedule so that the Assembly can discharge its responsibilities in an orderly fashion. I therefore appeal again to representatives who intend to submit draft resolutions to do so sufficiently in advance of the dates fixed for consideration of items to give members adequate time to examine them. I should also like to remind representatives again that additional time is needed for those draft resolutions involving changes in the work programme or additional expenditures, since they will require the preparation of a statement of programme-budget implications by the Secretary-General.

Furthermore, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee will need adequate time to review the programme-budget implications of a draft resolution before it can be acted on by the Assembly. The Assembly's attention to these matters would be appreciated.

AGENDA ITEM 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

ADDRESS BY MR. TOFILAU ETI ALESANA, PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF WESTERN SAMOA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Western Samoa.

Mr. Tofilau Eti Alesana, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Western Samoa, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Western Samoa, His Excellency The Honourable Tofilau Eti Alesana, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. ALESANA (Samoa): It is always an honour and a great pleasure to address the General Assembly. My first task, a happy one, is to congratulate you, Sir, most warmly on your election as President of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. We know that in your hands this will be a session of accomplishments.

Let me also thank your able predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, for his outstanding service during the forty-seventh session.

I would next express our concern and sadness over the recent disastrous earthquake in India and extend to the Government and, especially, to the families affected our profound sympathies.

Two years ago, when I last stood here, there was a sense of high expectation, for we were witnessing the drama of political changes to a new world. Many new nation States emerged from that process. We welcome the newest - and some of the smallest - Members of our global family who joined us this year: the Principality of Andorra, Eritrea, the Czech Republic, the Principality of Monaco, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Slovak Republic. As a small State itself, Samoa is particularly pleased to add its welcome, assured of the contribution these new Members will make to our common effort.

Let me also pay a tribute to the Secretary-General and express to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali our deepest admiration and appreciation for the spirit of reform and quality of leadership he brings to the work of the Organization.

With one voice we in this Hall have hailed the ending of East-West tensions. We are right to do so. It has brought about deep and positive changes. Now, as never before, the international community has real opportunities for cooperation and peace. In Washington, barely a month ago today, leaders of two great peoples, men of magnificent courage and foresight, seized such an opportunity for the Israelis and Palestinians. In our global village there is an imperative to secure a comprehensive, just and durable solution to the overall Arab-Israeli conflict. In turn, that peace effort needs to be able to draw sustenance - moral, political and financial - from the whole family of nations. Most warmly we applaud the courage and vision of this bold step. From our distance, and no matter how inadequate, I pledge to the people of Israel and to the Palestinians Samoa's entire support.

But the new opportunities for cooperation in this post-cold-war era are being severely challenged by conflicts that rage in many lands and by the human misery they cause. Tragedy and carnage are seemingly endless in Bosnia, in

Somalia, and in territories of the former Soviet Union. In other areas, too - far too many - we witness daily the most shocking violations of the human person and wanton disregard for the rule of law. This year alone, there have been close to 25 substantial conflicts in the world.

And war is not the only scourge. For we have not freed our world of hunger, poverty or illness. Millions of people have fled from internal strife and persecution, famine and natural disasters. Millions more are migrating for economic reasons.

In my part of the world, island communities now live under the constant threat of ecological disasters. A rise in sea levels and destructive tropical cyclones are particular dangers. The evidence we have is that these are the global and adverse effects of induced climate change. They prey on the natural vulnerabilities of many lands and their peoples, and severely undermine the national livelihood and economic development efforts of many Governments.

My purpose is not simply to catalogue misery and the negative, but rather to point to the vastness of our task. There is no scope for retreat - we must advance with resolve. The world cries out for responses and solutions. And the fact is, the world is now looking more and more to the United Nations. We do not, for a moment, delude ourselves about the complexities of these conflicts or the depth of longstanding animosities - least of all, in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. But I am compelled to say that the horrors being perpetuated in Bosnia offend common decency and almost every principle for which this Organization stands.

That is why we feel that the international community has not been swift or decisive enough in taking action to end the calculated brutality in Bosnia and avert the devastation of so much that is sacred in that land. We pray for the speediest possible settlement, one that is comprehensive and has realistic prospects for the lasting peace and economic prosperity of all concerned. There should be no reward for aggression.

The grim outlook for many troubled areas of the world should not, however, cast a shadow over the hope typified by the Palestinian-Israeli peace accord. Cambodia is a high point in peacemaking, and we rejoice in this special accomplishment for the people of that ancient country and for the United Nations, as we do in the announcement in this Assembly by Nelson Mandela of the imminent demise of apartheid. South Africa's move towards a multiracial and democratic society is the attainment of a dream we have all shared for so long. We pray for the peaceful success of the announced general elections in April 1994.

We are indeed at a turning-point - a point at which we should now turn to the healing process. We must put behind us the divisiveness and acrimony which have characterized the debates and the decisions of past years.

Almost every speaker in this debate has focused on peace-keeping and the unprecedented demands being made of the United Nations. Our support of United Nations peace-keeping operations is total, as is our acceptance of preventive diplomacy as fundamental to "An Agenda for Peace". We have no military resources or experience, and we have been able to assist only by way of our assessed contributions. But it is clear to us that failure to provide adequate financial and other resources undermines both the peace effort and the authority of the United Nations.

It seems to be generally acknowledged that, in the space of some two years, the cost of United Nations peace-keeping has quadrupled to a level currently four times larger than the United Nations regular budget. In our humble opinion, peace-keeping at such a level cannot possibly be sustained without adequate and improved financing and financial management. Above all, peace-keeping objectives and mandates need to be clearly identified and managed. There is everything to be gained by the application of the principles of accountability, consistency and transparency.

Peace-keeping at current levels has compounded the tragedy of war through the loss of United Nations staff and personnel. In the strongest terms, we condemn the attacks and deliberate targeting of United Nations peace-keeping forces wherever they occur. We support early and effective international measures and necessary arrangements within the United Nations system for the full protection of United Nations personnel and forces, as well as action against those who commit acts of violence against our messengers of peace.

In all this, the Security Council is the vital link. We now have a proposal before the Assembly to take a closer look at the arrangements and strengthening of the Security Council. We also acknowledge the useful report the Secretary-General has sent us on the various views expressed. Our own concern is for the efficacy and effectiveness of the Council. So long as these are assured, Samoa would support the required reforms to the Security

Council. But, no doubt, we should all take sufficient time to ponder these matters.

In the wider aspect, we believe that no amount of force and no measure of peace-keeping can sustain peace and security without attention to the root causes. The general experience is that human misery, brought about by poverty and the denial of human and democratic rights, is the real and fundamental problem. We therefore uphold the belief expressed by many leaders from this rostrum that socio-economic development and democratic reforms are essential to the prevention of political and social crises. We think this should remain a major preoccupation of the United Nations.

We believe deeply in the underlying importance of human rights in all United Nations activities. In this respect, we welcome the Declaration and Programme of Action produced by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna and the acknowledgement in unquestionable terms of the universality of human rights. The results of the Vienna Conference constitute a significant advance in the promotion and protection of human rights, not least in the recognition that development has a true claim to be considered a human right.

We agree with and support the proposal to establish a United Nations high commissioner for human rights. Such an office could serve as a strong focal point for coordination of the currently fragmented branches of the United Nations human rights system and could help to ensure that human rights are integrated into the work of all United Nations programmes.

The very basis of human rights is the right of peoples to determine their own future and governance. This is fundamental, and it is something very close to our hearts, given our experience and the political evolvement of our own State. The South Pacific Forum has continued to call on the metropolitan countries to take into account the wishes of the people in the Territories and to respect their right to self-determination.

We welcome the ongoing dialogue between France and all parties in New Caledonia regarding the future of the Territory. The peaceful evolution towards self-determination in New Caledonia is in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. Its attainment was made possible by the constructive intervention of the United Nations decolonization Committee and by the willingness of the Government of France, the parties in New Caledonia and the South Pacific Forum to show restraint to give full consideration to each other's concerns and sensitivities. What we see in New Caledonia today stands as a testament to the cooperative spirit characteristic of the Pacific region and as a true example of peaceful and preventive diplomacy at work.

At the same time, we acknowledge and respect the views and interests of those Territories that wish to continue with the status quo.

Peace, stability, security and the preservation of our environment are crucial to the South Pacific region. Our commitment to these objectives is unwavering, and Samoa, together with its regional partners, will continue to call for a permanent end to nuclear testing, to the dumping of chemical and toxic wastes and to the transportation of these materials in our waters. The South Pacific Forum countries have continued to urge the remaining nuclear-power States to heed our concerns and to accede to the Protocols of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. That Treaty is the paramount symbol of the region's strong feeling about and commitment to a nuclear-free environment. We are encouraged by recent indications from some of these States that they will reconsider their current positions on the Treaty and on other nuclear-related issues that are of concern to the region.

Samoa is particularly pleased about the extension of the nuclear-testing moratorium. However, we are deeply distressed to have learned last week of a breach of that moratorium. I have cause to believe that substantial numbers in the Assembly share our concern and our earnest prayer that no further tests will be carried out and that other nuclear Powers will not resume their nuclear-testing programmes. It is our dearest hope that such testing will one day cease - permanently. We also urge all Member States - the nuclear Powers in particular - to work towards the early conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty.

We welcome the unique opportunity offered by the end of the cold war to focus and develop comprehensive-nuclear-disarmament initiatives. We stand ready to do what we can in support of these. We should say, however, that the prospect of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and - worse - of their acquisition by unfriendly parties is of major concern to us, as, of course, to the world community as a whole. It underscores the urgent need for the control, reduction and eventual elimination of these deadly weapons. The Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is a vital part of the disarmament process must be extended indefinitely when it comes up for review in 1995.

We look to the nuclear-weapon States to take the lead in the nuclear-disarmament process and, at the same time, to illustrate with concrete action their full commitment to our collective goals and objectives. The South Pacific region cannot continue to be a testing ground for nuclear devices; or to be a dumping ground for chemical wastes; or to be exposed to contamination by toxic wastes and other environmentally threatening substances.

Environmental security is crucial to Samoa and other countries of the South Pacific. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio in 1992, provided us with an opportunity to put our global house in order - an occasion of promise, of rising hopes. The setting of Agenda 21 and the establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development are only first steps. Implementation is the difficult task - the true test.

Like other places, our small island States and low-lying atolls face a host of constraints. Isolated and ecologically fragile, small island States like my own are amongst the most vulnerable to external economic, trade and climatic factors. Without international cooperation, and without an integrated approach, the outlook is not promising.

The Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States - to be held in Barbados in April 1994 - will provide a first opportunity to implement Agenda 21 and to reaffirm commitments made in Rio. We firmly believe that international attention, focused at next year's global conference, will provide valuable guidance towards a sustainable-development effort worldwide. It seems to us that if there is failure to secure sustainable development for small island States, there will be no real chance of success elsewhere.

The work of the Preparatory Committee remains incomplete. But the stakes are too high for inconclusiveness, so a resumed preparatory session before the Barbados Conference is essential.

I should say that our call for international cooperation is fully matched by our resolve to do what is necessary and possible at the domestic level. As a country, we acknowledge and accept primary responsibility for our environment and development. To this end, we have completed a national environment-management plan, have put in place the necessary legislative framework and have taken steps to adhere to the appropriate international Conventions.

In all of this, we have had the fullest cooperation of the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme - an organization established by the Pacific region and partner countries to coordinate not only national and regional activities but also the region's participation in world-wide initiatives on the environment. This underlines our basic belief that the total efforts of all nations, acting responsibly and in concert, will be crucial if we are adequately to protect our environment and our planet.

I should note the general satisfaction of my delegation with the world-wide debate, which is now under way, about the future of development - and, thus, about our common future. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was a special landmark. A few months ago, contrary to predictions, the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights registered important accomplishments. Next year, we shall see the particularly crucial Conference on Population and Development; thereafter, the Conference on women, and then the social-development Summit.

Yesterday, we heard Papua New Guinea's initiative on opportunity and participation. We consider this a pertinent proposal, and that it is an important element in the overall effort to involve citizens and to enhance, in particular, the economies of developing countries.

These global conferences and initiatives will map out new priorities and courses of action requiring from States and ordinary citizens the highest degree of commitment and cooperation. Meantime, we will need to concentrate on strengthening and revitalizing our Organization if we are to respond efficiently and effectively to present and future priorities. To this purpose, Samoa supports all remedial reforms to the United Nations system to ensure optimum use of scarce resources.

Next year has been declared, by the Assembly, the International Year of the Family. In two years' time, the United Nations will mark its fiftieth anniversary. This gives us all reason to move ahead with our work, resolved to improve the condition of our world and the well-being of our global family.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Western Samoa for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Tofilau Eti Alesana, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Western Samoa, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. ALEXIS (Grenada): It is with profound pleasure that my delegation conveys greetings and best wishes from the Government and the people of Grenada to the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

My delegation is pleased to extend sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly during this forty-eighth session. We are especially pleased because you create history by being the first person from the region to which Grenada belongs to hold the prestigious post of General Assembly Presidency, coming as you do from our sister Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country, the Republic of Guyana.

My delegation takes this opportunity also to commend Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria for the excellent manner in which he conducted the Assembly's proceedings at its forty-seventh session. My Government also wishes to extend its commendations to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his indefatigable efforts in the service of the Organization.

The Grenadian delegation is pleased to extend a warm welcome to the six new Members of the United Nations: the Czech Republic; the Republic of Slovakia, Eritrea, Monaco, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Andorra.

The problems of developing countries are still daunting. Every country must try to help itself. My Government continues to pursue its own economic structural adjustment programme, with which the people of Grenada have shown great understanding and cooperation. But prolonged difficulties in the economic sector can give rise to attitudes and conditions that can adversely impact upon social development and administrative capacities, and so my delegation calls on the international community to show greater flexibility in assisting the adjustment process of Grenada and other countries experiencing economic conditions similar to Grenada's.

Poverty, debt, inadequate resources, marginalization and the lack of secure markets for our products deal serious blows to social, economic and political stability. Further, the impact on small, undiversified economies from liberalizing trade regimes and regional trading blocs has been shocking. The fact is that free trade is not always synonymous with fair trade: factors of size, resource endowment and levels of development must be duly considered in settling trade relations. This is particularly so with small, open, primary-producing economies, where one serious natural disaster, such as a hurricane, can devastate all the fruits of our national labour invested in bananas, cocoa and nutmeg.

In this scenario, concessioned trade is very much needed to produce anything like a level playing field. Developing countries will not progress on sympathy; they require equity. Small countries such as Grenada cannot do it all alone. We need assistance for diversification, for development of our human resources and for the implementation of sustainable development.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) has placed before the world a wide range of challenges for managing the environment in a sustainable way. Developing countries, in particular small island nation States, like Grenada, are anxious that all Governments should move faster to effect the programme laid out by UNCED's plan of work on sustainable development, Agenda 21.

Greater emphasis needs to be placed by donor agencies on training, as well as on technical and financial assistance to developing countries to aid in sustainable forestry and agricultural practices. My delegation is convinced that the problems of the environment cannot wait. Grenada is particularly pleased with Agenda 21's special recognition of the peculiar difficulties confronting the development of small island developing States and with the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), arising from that recognition, that will be held in Barbados in April and May 1994.

It is Grenada's sincere hope that that Conference will serve to generate a better understanding of the challenges and predicaments confronting small island developing States, and that it will produce the necessary partnership and establish a sound path to their sustainable development. Much of the important negotiations preparatory to the Conference remains incomplete. My delegation is concerned that the success of the Barbados Conference may be jeopardized unless an intercessional mechanism is arranged to provide for the advancement of the negotiations prior to April 1994.

Grenada joins the rest of the world in rejoicing over the success of diplomatic perseverance in Afghanistan, El

Salvador, Nicaragua, Cambodia and Haiti. Grenada is, however, highly disturbed by the renewal of politically motivated violence in Haiti. Grenada will continue to rally behind the United Nations and the Organization of American States in their efforts to restore democracy and stability to Haiti. Grenada welcomes the Governors Island negotiated settlement aimed at restoring to Haiti the legitimate Government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. We support the establishment of an international constabulary force in that country. We call on all in Haitian society to give democracy and peace a chance.

Grenada wishes to record its satisfaction over the historic attainment of formal recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). We further applaud the signing of the Palestinian autonomy agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. It is a long-awaited peace initiative which will pave the way for the continued peaceful negotiation of tougher issues. Such a step will, in the long term, contribute to making the Middle East and the world a more peaceful place.

Grenada welcomes the peace agreements initialled between Israel and Morocco and between Israel and Jordan as steps in the right direction.

Grenada welcomes the finalization of the demarcation of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq, which was accomplished by the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission on 20 May 1993. We also welcome the adoption by the Security Council of its resolution 833 (1993), in which it guaranteed the inviolability of the boundary between the two States and called for respect for that resolution.

My Government is, on the other hand, perturbed by the continuing wars in other parts of the world, such as the former Yugoslavia, Liberia, Somalia and Angola. We are alarmed at the lack of respect for United Nations peace-keepers and aid workers, and call upon all sides in such conflicts to turn to peaceful negotiation and respect for human lives.

The promotion of democracy and the enhancement of human rights must be vigorously pursued. The process of democratization has to be entrenched. My delegation, moreover, looks forward to welcoming to the United Nations, in the near future, the Republic of China on Taiwan. With its 21 million people, the Republic of China on Taiwan, has, over the past 20 years, progressed economically, socially and democratically to the point where it can no longer properly be kept out of the United Nations. The Republic of China on Taiwan has established diplomatic relations with a number of countries and has significantly contributed to the uplifting of the struggling economies of a great number of countries and the development of their peoples. Surely, these impressive achievements eminently qualify the Republic of China on Taiwan for admission to this Organization.

Peace and democracy reaching areas new to them has noticeably been resulting in the deflection of aid to them, at the expense of traditional stable democracies. That newly emerging democracies have to be given due attention cannot be denied, but this cannot be wholly at the expense of the old democracies. The peace dividend accruing from the end of the cold war and the halting of the arms race should be expansive enough to nurture new democracies without abandoning old ones to unnecessary and far-reaching social and societal conflicts. After all, the issue of development is no less important than the issue of peace.

International peace presupposes domestic quietude in the States making up the community of nations. This requires continuing emphasis on human-resource development and the enhancement of cultural and social amenities in such areas as education, health and housing. In this regard, Grenada insists on the protection of the rights of the child, enhancement of the rights of women and the strengthening of the family unit. The pursuit of the human race must be the nurturing of peace by the ending of discrimination and the enhancement of equality, whether between sexes or races, or with regard to social origins, religion or whatever other differences might have been created through ignorance or arrogance. As we in Grenada say "A child is a child".

My delegation welcomes the establishment of a criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. It is with great concern that the world has witnessed men, women and children being massacred in that region in the name of ethnicity and religion. Grenada takes this opportunity to encourage the establishment of similar tribunals in areas where they may be necessary.

Such cooperation as the world is seeing today in restoring democracy and civil and political rights to citizens of warring countries ought to be extended to the field of international criminal activities. Grenada stands ready to collaborate with other countries in putting a halt to such activities as illicit drug production, trafficking and consumption and money-laundering and their associated

ills. These tend to decay the moral fibre of a society and drain already scant resources in efforts to combat the menace, thus frustrating national development processes. Grenada has accordingly enacted legislation giving effect to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, of 1988, providing for the forfeiture and confiscation of the proceeds of crime, outlawing moneylaundering and promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the fight against these menaces.

Grenada is very pleased that the South African Parliament has agreed to establish a Transitional Executive Council, which is expected to allow the black majority to participate in the governing of their country. We received with joy the news that 27 April 1994 has been set as the date for the election of a Government in South Africa in which South Africans of all races, colours, beliefs and genders will participate. We applaud the efforts that have been made by the Government of President De Klerk and the African National Congress of Nelson Mandela to usher in genuine democracy in South Africa. We encourage all South Africans to give full support to that progress.

Throughout the world, people are looking towards the United Nations for solutions to their political, economic, ethnic and social problems. The freeing of the United Nations from ideological tensions has made this possible; but we are aware that the United Nations must now be restructured, the better to meet these ends. The composition of the Security Council should be re-examined, with new permanent seats on that Council being allotted to such countries as Japan, without current permanent membership being affected. Also, additional seats should be added. Further, an appropriate mechanism is needed to establish adequate oversight and accountability in the United Nations. The capability of the United Nations to conduct peace-keeping should be enhanced and rationalized.

World security requires all of us, nations great as well as small, to make extra efforts to attain and maintain peace and democracy for development. As a community of nations, let us therefore work diligently and tirelessly to attain these goals.

Mr. MBEKEANI (Malawi): The Malawi delegation is pleased to join other delegations in congratulating you, Mr. President, on your election to preside over the business of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Guyana is a sister country which is held in high regard and admiration by Malawi. You are an illustrious son of Guyana and are highly qualified and fully prepared to lead and manage the enormous tasks which must be accomplished at this session of the General Assembly. My delegation wishes your presidency great success.

At its forty-seventh session the General Assembly considered important and, in some cases, intractable issues. This would not have been possible were it not for the painstaking patience, efficiency and diplomatic skills of its President, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, a distinguished international jurist and former Foreign Minister of Bulgaria. The Malawi delegation congratulates him on a job well done.

My delegation wishes to express its profound sorrow for the considerable suffering, loss of life and destruction of property caused by the earthquake which occurred on 29 September 1993 in the Indian state of Maharashtra. The heartfelt and sincere condolences of the Government and the people of Malawi unreservedly go to the Government and the people of India as they struggle to alleviate the painful after-effects of this tragedy.

We are thankful to God for giving Malawi good rains in the season just ended. The drought experienced in the last two seasons was severe and devastating in its effects. All of southern Africa suffered terribly from this scourge. Malawi's economy was seriously affected by the drought, beginning in February 1992. In 1991 economic growth was 7.8 per cent in real gross domestic product. It declined in real terms by 7.9 per cent during 1992, which represented a precipitous fall in real income for the people. The volume of maize, our staple food, was only 600,000 tonnes in 1992, down from the 1991 production level of 1.6 million tonnes. In 1993 Malawi had a good harvest of close to 2 million tonnes of maize. However, complete recovery from the drought will take some time.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of my Government and the people of Malawi, to thank the United Nations system and, in particular, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, which were the major catalysts in the United Nations -southern African Development Community drought relief programme. We also thank the bilateral donors and the non-governmental organizations which, together, saved the day for Malawi and the whole southern African region with massive imports of food, medicines and other humanitarian assistance supplies. However, the Malawi economy continues to be confronted by a major balance-of-payments deficit problem arising from the large volume of maize imports during the drought.

Malawi has been hosting a large number of refugees from Mozambique, who started entering Malawi in large numbers in 1986, and by 1992 the refugee population in the country had soared to about 1.5 million people. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, non-governmental organizations and many other interested parties that have throughout been intimately involved in this humanitarian task will agree that, despite the severe adverse impact of hosting such a large number of people, Malawi is managing one of the most successful refugee programmes in the world, thanks to the prevailing peace, which is due to stable political leadership, good and reliable security structures and a fairly efficient administration.

Mr. Martini Herrera (Guatemala), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The problem of the Mozambican refugees in Malawi, which was a consequence of the civil war between the Government of Mozambique and RENAMO, will come to an end as all protocols of the Rome General Peace Accord are implemented in full. Malawi, which was represented at the historic signing of the Peace Accord on 4 October 1992, commends President Chissano of the Republic of Mozambique and Mr. Dhlakama, President of RENAMO, for signing the Peace Accord. We strongly encourage them to continue to work closely together and with the United Nations to ensure that peace and political stability are firmly established in Mozambique. This is a prerequisite for the reconstruction of that great and beautiful country to commence and for progress to be realized in all areas of development. My delegation is therefore fully supportive of Security Council resolution 863 (1993) and calls on all the parties to implement it speedily.

The Government and people of Malawi wish to see the uninterrupted repatriation of their brothers and sisters to their homes in Mozambique in safety and security. We therefore call for the specific prioritization of the de-mining programme, the demobilization of the armed forces and their placement in the designated assembly areas, and the finalization of discussions on the draft electoral law. The people of Mozambique demand this, and it is also in the vital interests of Malawi, which has suffered tremendously from the adverse impact of the 16-year civil war in Mozambique.

My delegation wishes to stress that the cost of hosting over 1 million refugees not only is very high but, for Malawi, has reached a crisis point. This cost is paid in the displacement of Malawians from agricultural land; in over-grazing, deforestation and environmental degradation; in tremendous pressures and strain on the Government administrative infrastructure, budgetary and human resources; and, not least, in the strain on the socio-economic infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, roads, bridges and water supplies. My delegation is taking this opportunity to appeal to the donor community for assistance in all these areas, which are crucial for the country's sustainable development.

The General Peace Accord in Mozambique is close to the heart of Malawi. I therefore wish to reiterate that Malawi will continue to collaborate with Mozambique closely - at the bilateral level, between the Governments of the two sister countries; through the Tripartite Commission, whose members are Malawi, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Mozambique; and through the Malawi-Mozambique Security Commission - until the peace process has been consolidated. Peace and the return of normal life in Mozambique will guarantee Malawi the use of its traditional, and shortest, routes to the sea via the ports of Nacala and Beira. The reopening and full use of these ports will represent considerable savings through highly reduced transport costs and in limited foreign exchange resources.

My country undertook the most historic event since independence by holding, on 14 June 1993, the national referendum which was initiated by our President, His Excellency Ngwazi Kamuzu Banda in order to give the people of Malawi the opportunity to choose between a one-party and multi-party system of government. My delegation is pleased to report to this Assembly that by all accounts, including those of the United Nations, it was a peaceful, free and fair exercise. Sixty-three per cent of the population voted for a multi-party system of government. Their decision was respected and accepted by my President in a landmark statement on 17 June 1993, which included an announcement of his intention to amend the Constitution to allow for the formation of political parties, to call for a general election in a year's time and to declare a general amnesty to enable political exiles to return home and participate in the political process.

My delegation takes this opportunity to convey to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the gratitude of my Government and the people of Malawi for the assistance the United Nations system provided in making the national referendum exercise a resounding success. Intergovernmental organizations such as the

European Community and other bilateral donors also provided Malawi with invaluable assistance during this period. My Government is most grateful to all of them. What has happened in Malawi demonstrates beyond question the repeatedly stated commitment of my President and his Government to peaceful reforms, good governance, human rights and democratization. Those who did not believe in the seriousness of this commitment have been proved totally wrong.

For the last 29 years of its independence, Malawi has been preoccupied with socio-economic development, which is rural-based in its reality, as a matter of sustained and deliberate Government policy. The country had no other choice because it is completely agricultural, with a large small-holder agriculture component as its backbone. The political leadership consistently and untiringly preached the doctrine of respect for the land and farming to the ordinary people in the villages throughout the country. This has paid off in the disciplined commitment the Malawi people have to farming. As a consequence, over the years a large proportion of donor financing has focused on the agricultural sector.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank, on behalf of my Government, all the multilateral donors - the Bretton Woods institutions and the African Development Bank, among others - and the bilateral cooperating partners for the unremitting assistance they have given Malawi, enabling it to implement successfully its agricultural programmes and projects over these past years. Without this assistance, it would not have been possible to achieve the sense of discipline and respect for farming that is now consolidated in the people of Malawi, which confirms a vision that the Malawi leadership has carried out with practical zeal and tenacity.

Regrettably, in the very recent past, Malawi's modest achievements in the agricultural sector and the economy in general have had to go through severe and unpalatable shocks well beyond the Government's control, such as the drought and refugee problems. But, more than that, the economy has had to cope in the past year with the sudden suspension of donor assistance by the Government's developed partners. Consequently, the country's balance-of-payments financing requirements were badly affected and this disproportionately imposed considerable negative results on the economy's performance. For example, private-sector firms performed far below capacity and the financing of almost all agreed development projects stopped suddenly and completely. Malawi is small, poor and landlocked. It is also in the category of least developed countries, with a population of only about 9 million. Malawi could therefore hardly sustain or cushion this kind of massive damage to its economy. Its external debt burden soared, its terms of trade deteriorated badly and the livelihood of the ordinary men, women and children in the villages was badly affected.

The issues of human rights, good governance and other conditionalities that were behind these actions by the donor community have now, I am happy to say, been dealt with decisively, each one in an irreversible manner and, where applicable, by Act of Parliament. For example, due process of law is firmly established and in practice in Malawi. There are no political detainees in any of its prisons. The International Committee of the Red Cross is workinq closely with the Government, and has already visited all prisons and made recommendations for improvements where this has been found to be necessary. There is freedom of expression in the country. As I speak, over 20 newspapers and magazines are in circulation. So far, six political parties have registered and are bracing themselves for the forthcoming general election.

At present the Malawi Congress Party, which is continuing to rule the country until the people elect a new government, has, together with other political parties in the country, established the National Consultative Council and the National Executive Committee, which have clearly defined powers to oversee the transitional process in the run-up to the general election. Each of the political parties, including the Malawi Congress Party, has equal representation on the National Consultative Council and the National Executive Committee. Those institutions ensure and guarantee that there is dialogue between and among Malawians, who discuss and resolve whatever differences may exist on the issues affecting the transition. Those institutions replace the President's Committee on Dialogue and the Public Affairs Committee, which were established immediately after the referendum and, in addition, are designed to work closely with the Government and the National Parliament. The United Nations, particularly through its Electoral Assistance Unit in the Secretariat here in New York and through the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva, has been a catalyst in this whole transitional process. My Government is therefore most encouraged, being convinced that the peace and stability that have existed since the holding of the national referendum will continue until and after the forthcoming general election, which is expected to take place some time in May 1994.

These positive and irreversible developments I have described give my Government the confidence that all its bilateral- development partners and its major multilateral donors will fully resume development assistance flows and balance-of-payments support to Malawi. This, we hope, will be done without further delays, in the interests of reviving the economy quickly and reducing the severe damage it has sustained and the unnecessary continued suffering of its people.

The Malawi delegation is grateful to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in particular, because it was the first to confirm, in a report to its Governing Council at its fortieth session, in June, that there existed in Malawi an enabling political, economic and social environment to implement its Fifth Country Programme. The Malawi Government has no need to prove its abiding commitment to development. Allow me, therefore, to take this opportunity to appeal to the donor community not to reduce its pledges of funding to the UNDP. To do so would have catastrophic effects on the whole democratization process, on the ongoing field programmes and projects and also on the successful projects being implemented under the Fifth Country Programme.

At this juncture the Malawi delegation wishes to reaffirm its unwavering support of the recently adopted Tokyo Declaration on African Development, which represents the first concrete action and commitment of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. Malawi, a least-developed country, would also like to take this opportunity to lend its unwavering support to the Programme of Action for Least-Developed Countries, which found its expression in the Declaration issued by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of least-developed countries when they met here in New York on 30 September 1993, and to the Declaration of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 that was adopted on 5 October 1993. We hope that the donor community will respond positively and act accordingly on these specific problems affecting the developing countries. Their decisive resolutions are pivotal to the role of the United Nations in development and integral to the call issued in General Assembly resolution 47/181 for the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive report on an agenda for development and for the Assembly to discuss it in its preliminary form at this current session.

Malawi is not oblivious of the wider political atmosphere that is affecting international relations and causing serious problems with regard to peace and security. The desperate situation and horrendous scenes of the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina represent one such example. It is the strong conviction of the Malawi Government that peace is the only answer to the unending violence we are witnessing in the Balkans. There is an extremely urgent need to end the suffering of the people there - innocent men, women and children. My delegation strongly supports all efforts of the United Nations and the European Community, and those of other parties, to resolve the problem through the ongoing negotiations in Geneva and elsewhere. The problem is a human catastrophe, notwithstanding its tragic, historical roots.

With regard to Somalia, my Government is of the view that the Somalis should resolve their problems themselves. However, the prerequisite for realizing that objective is to establish and consolidate peace throughout Somalia and to help create processes that will make it possible for the country to reaffirm its sovereignty. Tremendous humanitarian-assistance achievements have already been made to alleviate the plight of the Somali people, who are suffering from hunger, starvation and death in the midst of mayhem, anarchy and the complete collapse of civil authority. The United Nations and the international community, through the contributions of selfless non-governmental organizations and all nations - particularly the United States, which has contributed troops under the United Nations flag - deserve to be thanked for bringing Somalia back to life. In the view of my delegation, it is imperative that the United Nations and the international community be allowed to complete this wholesome task by establishing conditions for peace and civil authority based clearly on the Addis Ababa agreements of 27 March 1993. The Malawi delegation fully supports the present United Nations role in Somalia.

Similarly, it is the strong conviction of my Government that the present situation in Angola calls for strong and dramatic action by the international community. The United Nations has been selfless in what it has done in Angola, where the untold suffering of women, children and the elderly goes on unabated and is indeed completely inexplicable and totally unnecessary. The Malawi delegation calls upon the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations and the signatory Powers to the Bicesse Peace Accords to compel the UNITA leadership to come to the negotiating table with the Angola Government to establish peace, security and stability in the country. My Government fully supports Security Council resolution 864 (1993), which has now been put into effect. Dr. Savimbi and the UNITA leadership must not ignore international concerns and the content of that resolution. They must

honour and respect the results of the United Nations-supervised general election, which by all accounts was free and fair.

With regard to the situation in South Africa, the Malawi delegation wishes to put on record its complete support for the historic agreement by the Multi-Party Negotiating Council in Johannesburg, whose successfully negotiated transitional institutions have now been enacted into law by the parliament in Cape Town. Those institutions are designed to oversee and control the influential factors in the run-up to the general election on 27 April 1994. I refer in particular to the Transitional Executive Council and to the Independent Broadcasting Authority, the Independent Media Commission and the Independent Electoral Commission.

My delegation takes this opportunity, on behalf of the Malawi Government, to congratulate all the parties on the Negotiating Council and, in particular, the African National Congress and Mr. Nelson Mandela, its President, and the President of South Africa, Mr. Frederick de Klerk and his National Party. It has been a very long haul to reach this historic stage, and the imperative is therefore clear, namely, that all possible assistance by the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the European Community, the Commonwealth Secretariat and friendly Governments and people of good will must now be intensified in order to remove all forms of violence, ensure that the general election takes place on 27 April 1994 and that a non-racial, democratic government is installed in South Africa, based on the will of the majority of its people.

My delegation welcomes the historic agreement on mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) which was signed on 13 September 1993 in Washington, D.C. It provides a framework for lasting peace in the Middle East, and in the view of the Malawi delegation, it deserves all the support it can receive from all well-disposed sources. History dictates that this should be so. This agreement is a prerequisite to international peace, security and political stability beyond the Middle East.

The PLO/Israel peace agreement is yet another demonstration of the dramatic changes in international relations that have taken place in the last three to four years, following the collapse of communism and the end of the cold war. It is in this context, that my Government is optimistic that the still unresolved major international political issues will be similarly dealt with, issues such as the problem of North and South Korea and that of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan. In the view of the Malawi delegation, the time has now come for serious consideration to be given to the eligibility of the Republic of China on Taiwan to become a Member of the United Nations. We cannot talk about human rights and the universality of the United Nations while in the same breath ignoring the existence of over 20 million people in the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Finally, allow me to make observations on two pertinent issues. First, my delegation welcomes the recent pronouncement by the United States delegation on supporting the membership of Japan and Germany in the Security Council. This announcement is definite recognition that the time has come for representation in the Security Council to reflect the changed international political scene and reality as well as geographical balance. The Security Council must not only be transparent in its decision-making; it is a political necessity that it also reflect what the world is today, and not what it was 48 years ago. There is no other organ in the United Nations today which makes such momentous decisions affecting international peace and security. My delegation is therefore strongly of the view that Africa equally deserves to have a permanent seat or equal and balanced representation of some kind, in the Council. The Malawi delegation looks forward to the expected deliberations on this issue, which will inevitably go beyond the life of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Representation on governing councils of the respective United Nations agencies and bodies is another important subject before the General Assembly at this session, in the context of the reform, restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in all its aspects. My delegation supports a negotiated approach to the points of disagreement between the developing countries and their partners in development as a whole. The only way forward is for the two groups to work together and arrive at a consensus by the end of November 1994. My delegation will support the view taken by the Group of 77 on this issue, when it comes to a conclusion in due course.

I wish you, Sir, and the Assembly fruitful deliberations.

Mr. ALIYEV (Azerbaijan) *(interpretation from Russian)*: Allow me first to congratulate Mr. Samuel Insanally on his election to his responsible post, and to wish him every success in his work.

Allow me also to express gratitude to the President of our last session, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for his able guidance of our work, and to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General, for his dynamic, tireless work to restructure the Organization and enhance its effectiveness, given the qualitative changes occurring in the system of international relations.

I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new members of the United Nations: the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Eritrea, Monaco and Andorra.

The forty-eighth session of the General Assembly is taking place at a momentous time. The twentieth century, which has experienced two of the most destructive wars in the history of mankind, as well as the cold war and the arms race, which have depleted natural and financial resources, the intellectual and moral potential of civilization, is nevertheless ending on an optimistic note. Totalitarian regimes have fallen, scores of countries have gained independence and universal values of democracy and the market economy are now finding new advocates throughout the world.

We are proud that our small country, which straddles Europe and Asia, a country with an ancient culture and a proud history, has not been left behind in the truly universal historical process of the triumph of democracy and national and economic revival. Azerbaijan regained its independence less than two years ago. The path travelled by our country over these 22 months has not been without difficulties and has been marked by contradictions and tragic events. Nevertheless, we are convinced that the young State of Azerbaijan is following the only true path leading to genuine independence.

This has been borne out by the results of the recent presidential elections held at the beginning of October, when the overwhelming majority of the people of Azerbaijan voted for Mr. Heydar Aliyev, an experienced politician and recognized leader of our country, who is firmly committed to the idea of building a democratic, secular society with a market economy.

Unfortunately, the natural historical process of the fall of empires and the acquisition of independence and statehood by their peoples is often accompanied by excesses of extreme nationalism. Many attempt to exploit the democratization of the social and political life of young independent States to undermine their internal stability. Nationalist separatist movements are often used as a way to achieve these ends.

Unfortunately, Azerbaijan has fallen victim to such acts of provocation. For six years now the Republic of Armenia has been waging an undeclared war against Azerbaijan to fulfil its territorial claims. The sad facts of Armenia's aggression are as follows: 20 per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan is now occupied by Armenian troops, and 1 million of our country's civilians have no homes or means of survival. The economic infrastructure of the Azerbaijani Republic's occupied region has been destroyed. Unique historical and cultural sites of Azerbaijan have been destroyed. And all this is occurring under the cover of an ongoing propaganda campaign and alleged non-involvement by the Republic of Armenia in the aggression.

Azerbaijan has often proclaimed, and continues to proclaim, its commitment to the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes. We welcome and commend the efforts of the international community, the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) as well as the efforts made by individual States - Russia, the United States, Turkey, Iran and Kazakhstan - in recent years to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Armenia/Azerbaijan conflict.

Azerbaijan welcomed the Security Council's adoption of resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993) calling for the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from Azerbaijan territory that had been seized. Azerbaijan also welcomed the initial timetable - worked out within the framework of the Minsk Group of the CSCE - of urgent steps to implement Security Council resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993), several revised drafts of which, however, were aborted because of the Armenian side.

Azerbaijan stresses its commitment to the initial approach of the CSCE - that is, that the Minsk Conference should be preceded by the complete liberation of Azerbaijan's occupied territories. This was stressed in particular by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, G. A. Aliyev, yesterday during the reception for CSCE representatives who are now visiting the region.

We are confident that, despite certain difficulties - sometimes substantive - in the approach to the terms of the peaceful settlement of the conflict, the political realism and the sense of responsibility for the fate of our people shown

by the Azerbaijan side will be appreciated by our negotiating partners.

Azerbaijan, which is richly endowed with a variety of natural resources and which has a fairly well-developed industrial potential, has all the conditions necessary to overcome our objective difficulties in this transitional period towards a market economy.However, since one out of every six inhabitants of our country has been forced to leave his home and now has no means of survival, as a result of the hostilities and occupation of one fifth of our territory, the humanitarian assistance provided by various international organizations that have enormous experience in this area is assuming great importance for our country.

In this difficult period for my country, Azerbaijan - and primarily the people of Azerbaijan, who have suffered most - has been given all round support and assistance by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. On behalf of my people and Government, I take this opportunity to express profound gratitude to all international organizations, humanitarian institutions and specialized agencies and the peoples and Governments of many States that have responded to the suffering of the Azerbaijan people who have fallen victim to aggression.

The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan also expresses profound gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for having established a United Nations - United Nations Development Programme Interim Office in Azerbaijan. We are deeply convinced that the activities of this Office will help to strengthen and expand the comprehensive relations between our Republic and the United Nations system. We are convinced, also, that this cooperation will be mutually advantageous in view of the initial results of interaction between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the system of specialized agencies of the United Nations, the majority of which our country joined in 1992 and 1993.

We attach overriding importance to international cooperation in the field of the environment and sustainable development and also to the comprehensive expansion of world trade and the elimination of all barriers that restrict that process.

Azerbaijan welcomed the decision to convene a World Summit for Social Development and is prepared to take an active part in preparing for that Summit, the successful convening of which we believe will lay the basis for an effective global development strategy for the twenty-first century.

Our country is taking an active part in the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), which will take place in 1996 in Istanbul.

Thus despite the objective and subjective difficulties encountered by my country, Azerbaijan, during the past year has been taking decisive action to integrate itself fully into the world community. We are convinced that integration into the world's political, economic and humanitarian process is possible only by increasing cooperation between States at the bilateral and multilateral levels.

Our country shares the general conviction regarding the need to reduce the threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction and subsequently to destroy them, has acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and is taking an active part in the preparatory work for the Review Conference that will take place in 1995. Azerbaijan supports the indefinite extension of that Treaty and believes that it should be made universal. We are convinced that the non-proliferation Treaty is an instrument that strengthens all international efforts and regional initiatives that seek to prevent any proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to eliminate obstacles that threaten international and regional peace and security.

In this connection we welcome the positive steps taken recently in the area of disarmament, including the adoption of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, which was signed by Azerbaijan and the majority of countries of the world.

One outstanding example of our progress towards building a democratic, lawful State was Azerbaijan's accession to the basic instruments of international law in the area of human rights, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, and some others. Our country is very interested in the various initiatives being taken in the area of protecting human

rights. The idea of establishing, within the United Nations system, a new post of high commissioner for human rights, reflects an intention to enhance international cooperation in this area. We are prepared actively to participate in the discussions on this question.

Another pressing issue, one that requires urgent and constant attention, is that of refugees and displaced persons. It is time for the international community to draw up proper rules and standards to govern massive, forced migrations which could help overcome their main causes and consequences.

Desirous of making a worthy contribution to the various areas of the activities of the United Nations, Azerbaijan submitted its candidacy for, and was elected to, the Commission on Human Settlements and the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development. We are convinced that the great scientific potential and practical experience of our specialists will help these commissions to do effective work.

In 1995 the United Nations will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. In the almost five decades that have elapsed since the United Nations was created, its historic meaning and universality have become strikingly clear. Today it is time for serious, meaningful changes, changes commensurate with the needs of our rapidly changing world. We believe that, given the new context of international relations, the restructuring of the United Nations, and particularly of the Security Council, must meet the great expectations of Member States. Expansion of the membership of the Security Council, the need for which is the subject of serious discussion, should help the Council continue effectively to discharge its primary task, that of the maintenance of international peace and security. Of course the role and responsibility of the Secretary-General will shift towards enhanced peacemaking and diplomatic activity.

In conclusion, we look to the future with optimism, to a future where peace and cooperation will prosper. We call upon States Members of the United Nations to make every effort to promote the establishment of a safe, secure, common home. We are sure that constructive discussions and debates at this session will make an important contribution to the building of a better world in the coming century.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I call on the representative of Albania, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and five for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. DUMI (Albania): I regret having to speak again in exercise of the right of reply, but, the statement made last week by the representative of the republic of Greece, in exercise of his right of reply, requires the following clarifications.

The representative of Greece called on the Republic of Albania to respect the right of national minorities in the same way as Greece does. As a country newly emerged from dictatorship, Albania has much to learn and to put into practice as it progresses towards application of the most advanced European common values. Indeed, it is doing so. However, although we gave a friendly welcome to the Greek suggestion, I must point out that my country is not prepared to adopt the Greek practice: denial of the existence of the national minorities within its borders.

It is well known that there are several ethnic minority groups living in Greece, arbitrarily unrecognized and persecuted by the Greek authorities. I shall just focus on an important large one - tens of thousands of Muslim Albanians living in Chamiria. Beginning about 50 years ago, they have been subjected to forced deportation to Albania and Turkey, forced to leave their ancestral land and abandon their property. Moreover, for many decades the Orthodox Chami people and the old Albanian community in Greece, known as Arvanitei, have been subjected to different assimilation practices. They are denied all rights - even the most fundamental human right: the right to declare and develop their national identity. Their rights, as provided for in international law, must be restored and scrupulously respected.

This question should be considered in parallel with that of the rights of the Greek minority in Albania, since the principle of reciprocity applies equally to all States and nations. We have already presented our views to the Greek authorities. Albania will continue to work, bilaterally and multilaterally, on this issue, and we are confident that common language can and will be found.

Dialogue and understanding must prevail in dealing with issues concerning the treatment of minorities. To this

end, Albania has shown good will and a constructive spirit. However, the use of pressure and of related tactics, such as the Greek authorities' recent forced expulsion and ill-treatment of more than 20,000 Albanian migrants, is not the way to solve these problems, nor is it in accordance with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process.

As regards the Greek allegation, that the Albanian Mission misrepresented

> "the content of a letter ... by the CSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities", *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 19th meeting)*

Mr. van der Stoel's report is realistic and objective and exposes as artificial the noise made by Greece about the situation of the Greek minority in Albania.

Finally, I am authorized to reiterate the statement made here by Albania's Minister for Foreign Affairs, that the Albanian democratic Government

> "is determined to build a modern State and a civilized society, based on respect for the human rights of all strata of the population without exception or discrimination." (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 5th meeting*)

No doubt this will be made a reality through deeds rather than words, but, as an old saying goes, Babylon was not built overnight.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.